

No. 1

**WINTER
ISSUE**

5 FAVORITE FEATURES!



IND

Leading COMICS

10¢



**STAR-SPANGLED KID • CRIMSON AVENGER
GREEN ARROW • VIGILANTE • SHINING KNIGHT**



THE "BIG 8"

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magazines!



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ALL TOGETHER IN ONE WHIRLWIND ADVENTURE!

**the
STAR-SPANGLED
KID**

VIGILANTE

**the
GREEN
ARROW**

**SHINING
KNIGHT**

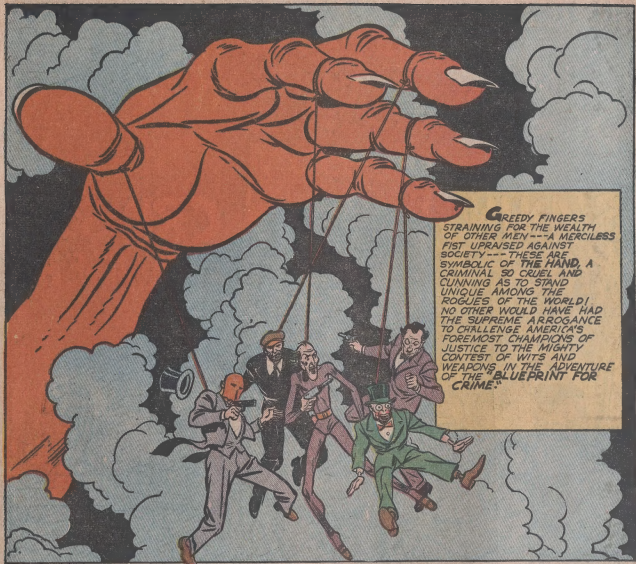
FROM TODAY ON, THE GRIM
HOSTS OF GANGDOM HAVE
A NEW AND POWERFUL
COMBINE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS
TO CONTEND WITH.....
YOU KNOW ALL THESE
HEROES... NOW FOLLOW
THEM AS THEY POOL THEIR
VAST POWERS TO LASH
OUT WITH CRUSHING FORCE
AGAINST DARK DEMONS
OF DESTRUCTION IN THE
HAND OF A MASTERMIND
OF MACHIAVELLIAN
CUNNING AND POWER!

**CRIMSON
AVENGER**



BUT HOW CAME THESE GALLANT FIGURES TO JOIN IN MORTAL
COMBAT AGAINST THE ARCH-CRIMINAL AND HIS GLITTERING GALAXY
OF GOONS? STRANGELY ENOUGH, IT WAS THE ARCH-CRIMINAL
HIMSELF WHO BROUGHT THEM TOGETHER!

**TURN THE PAGE... READ ON... LEARN HOW THE SUPER-EGO OF A
SUPER-CROOK LED HIM TO PIT HIMSELF AGAINST THESE MODERN
KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE!**



GREEDY FINGERS STRAINING FOR THE WEALTH OF OTHER MEN---A MERCILESS FIST UPRaised AGAINST SOCIETY--- THESE ARE SYMBOLIC OF THE HAND, A CRIMINAL SO CRUEL AND CUNNING AS TO STAND UNIQUE AMONG THE ROGUES OF THE WORLD! NO OTHER WOULD HAVE HAD THE SUPREME ARROGANCE TO CHALLENGE AMERICA'S FOREMOST CHAMPIONS OF JUSTICE TO THE MIGHTY CONTEST OF WITS AND WEAPONS IN THE ADVENTURE OF THE BLUEPRINT FOR CRIME!

A DEATH SENTENCE IS PRONOUNCED BY A JUDGE FROM WHOM THERE IS NO APPEAL---

I'M SORRY, THE X-RAYS INDICATE THAT YOU HAVE LESS THAN A MONTH TO LIVE. I'VE CONSULTED WITH EXPERTS AND I'M AFRAID THERE'S NO HOPE!

YOU'RE SURE? LESS THAN A MONTH?



AS THE PHYSICIAN STARTS BACK TO THE CITY, HE PONDERS A MYSTERY OUTSIDE THE BOUNDS OF MEDICINE ---



A STRANGE HOUSE-- A STRANGE MAN-- WONDER WHY HE'S SO SECRETIVE ABOUT HIMSELF?

WHILE IN THE ISOLATED HOUSE, THE CONDEMNED MAN BROODS BITTERLY---

DYING! ME-- THE HAND-- THE GREATEST CRIMINAL THE WORLD HAS EVER KNOWN! WHAT A PITY!



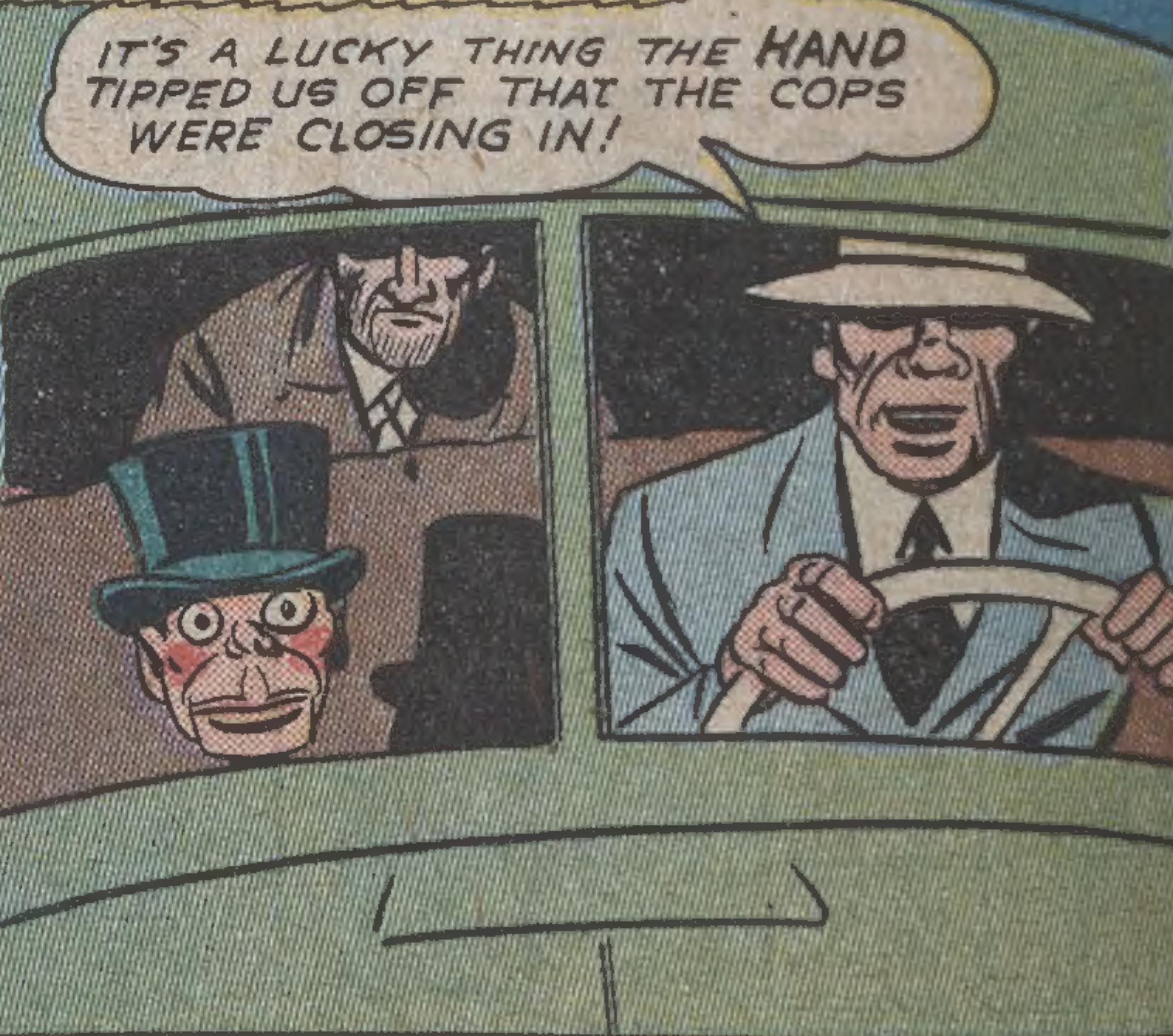
SINISTER UNDERWORLD FORCES ARE SET IN MOTION---AND ALARM SWEEPS THE NATION AS A SERIES OF SENSATIONAL PRISON BREAKS LIBERATES THE COUNTRY'S MOST NOTORIOUS CRIMINALS!



GUNMEN AMBUSH A POLICE SQUAD ON ITS WAY TO RAID THE HIDEOUT OF THE DUMMY, INFAMOUS KIDNAPER...



WHILE THAT BAFFLING DOLL-LIKE FIGURE--IN ITSELF A PUZZLE LONG UNSOLVED--IS SPEEDED OUT OF THE DANGER ZONE BY ARMED HENCHMEN!



BY DEVIOUS WAYS THE FIVE FUGITIVE CRIMINALS ARRIVE AT THE MYSTERIOUS HILLTOP HOUSE, WHERE THE HAND AWAITS THEM...

ALL OF YOU OWE YOUR LIBERTY TO ME! I HAVE BROUGHT YOU HERE TO OFFER YOU SOMETHING ELSE---A GAMBLE THAT MAY MAKE YOU RICH OR END YOUR CAREERS PERMANENTLY! I HAVE PLANNED A PERFECT CRIME FOR EACH OF YOU... YOU WILL BE THE **HAND'S FIVE FINGERS!**

YOU'RE ALL RIGHT, **HAND!**



NOT SO FAST! IN CARRYING THAT CRIME OUT, EACH OF YOU WILL BE OPPOSED BY A WORTHY OPPONENT! YOU WILL PLAY A LIFE-AND-DEATH GAME, WITH MY BRAINS AND YOUR WITS AND WEAPONS MATCHED AGAINST SUCH MEN AS THE **GREEN ARROW** AND THE **CRIMSON AVENGER!**

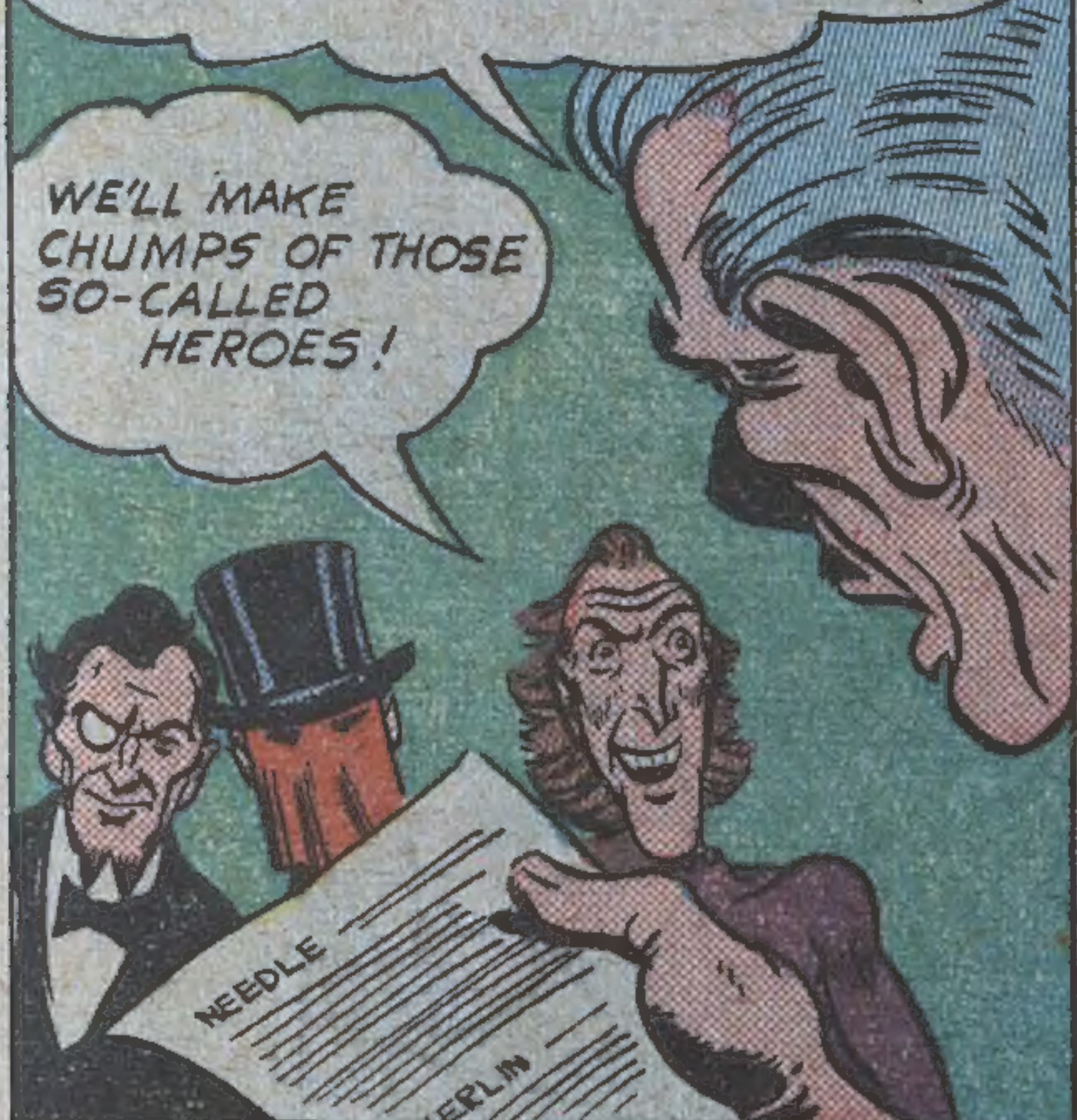
WHO CARES? WITH OUR BRAINS AND THE **HANDS PLANS**, NOBODY CAN STOP US!

WHAT'S THE IDEA?



HERE'S THE WHOLE DOPE! FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS TO THE LETTER, AND YOU'LL BE SAFE! **MERLIN**, YOU'RE TO GO TO DEATH VALLEY... YOU, **NEEDLE**, TO THE PANAMA CANAL ZONE...

WE'LL MAKE CHUMPS OF THOSE SO-CALLED HEROES!



LEFT ALONE, THE HAND ENJOYS HIS PRIVATE JOKE...

NOW TO LINE UP THE OPPOSITION. HA-HA! I'LL ENJOY THIS AS MUCH AS IF I WERE TAKING PART IN IT! AND IF ANY OF THE MANHUNTERS GETS HIS MAN, I'LL ATTEND TO HIM PERSONALLY!

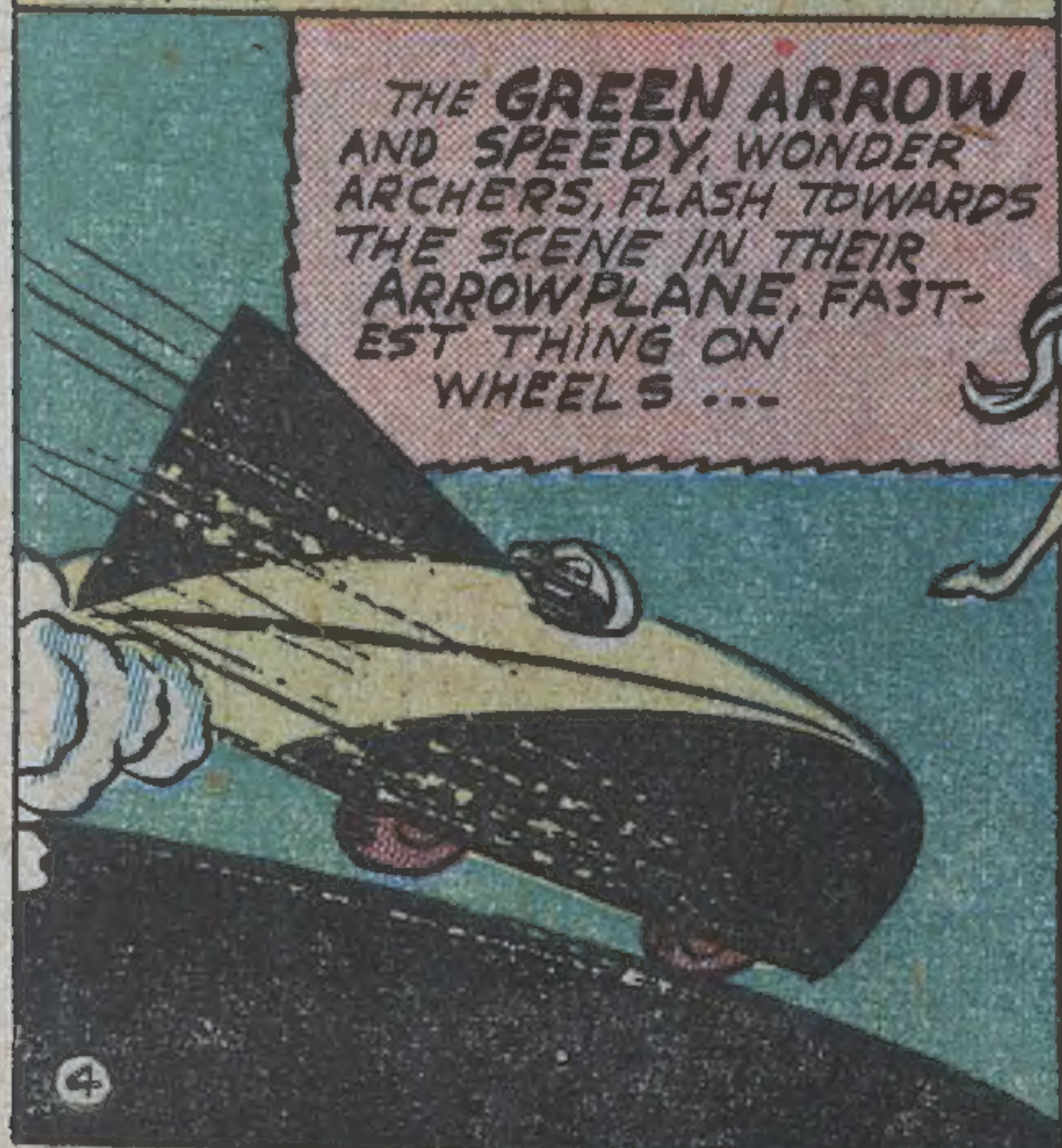


A CHALLENGE TO CHAMPIONS! THE **HAND**, MASTER OF CRIME, INVITES THE **GREEN ARROW**, THE **SHINING KNIGHT**, THE **CRIMSON AVENGER**, THE **VIGILANTE**, THE **STAR SPANGLED KID** TO PARTICIPATE IN THE GREAT-EST CRIMINAL CHASE IN HISTORY! **TUESDAY AT 10 P.M. IN GOTHAM CITY AUDITORIUM.**

NEXT DAY, A FULL-PAGE AD APPEARS IN NEWSPAPERS IN ALL SECTIONS OF THE COUNTRY...

NOT ONE OF THE ARCH-FOES OF CRIME SPURNS THE CHALLENGE. FROM ALL POINTS OF THE COMPASS THEY CONVERGE AT THE APPOINTED SPOT...

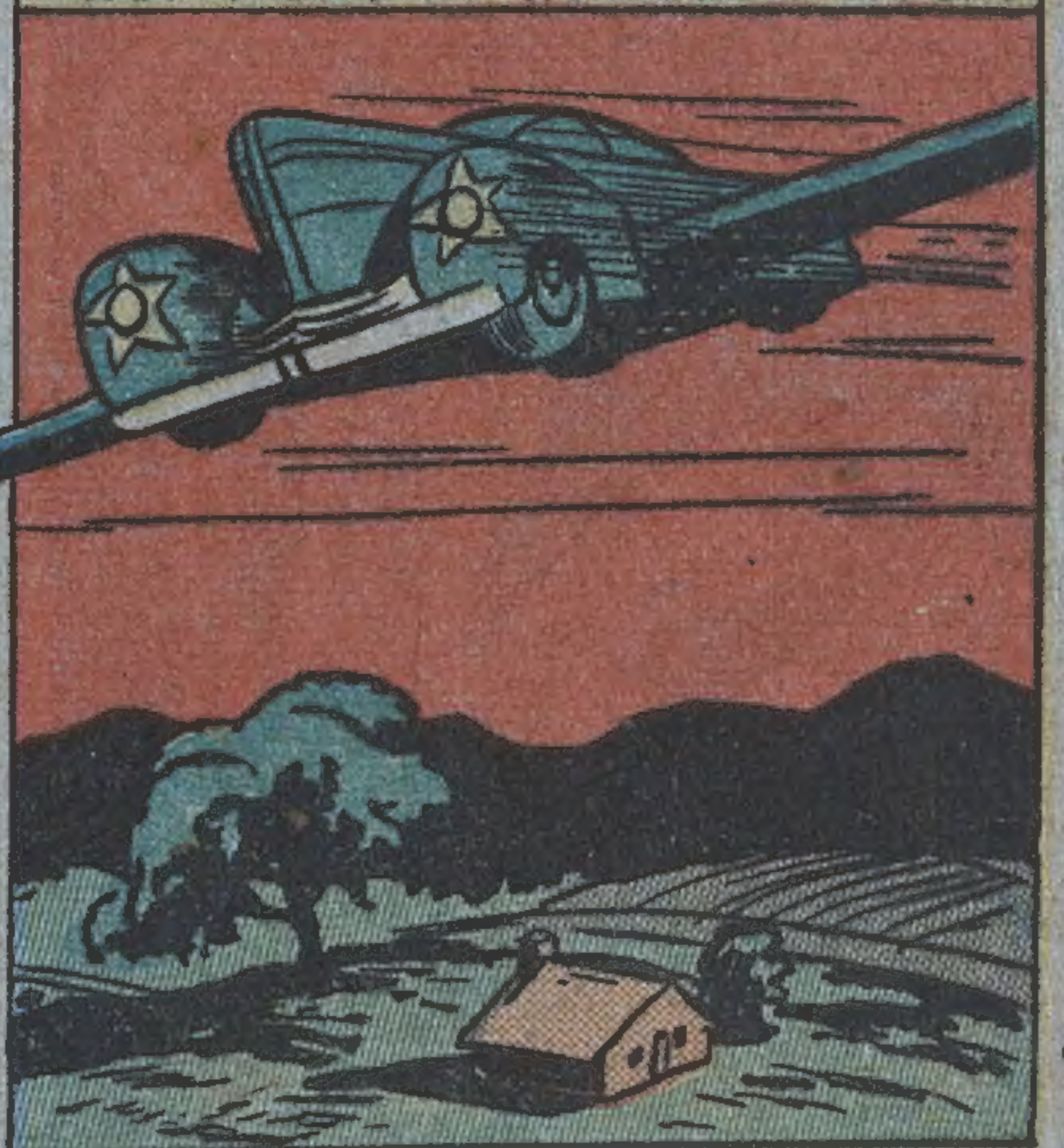
THE **GREEN ARROW** AND **SPEEDY**, WONDER ARCHERS, FLASH TOWARDS THE SCENE IN THEIR **ARROWPLANE**, FAST-EST THING ON WHEELS...



THE **SHINING KNIGHT** RIDES THE CLOUDS ON HIS WINGED STEED, VICTORY...



THE **STAR - SPANGLED KID** AND **STRIPEY** STREAK THROUGH A STARRY SKY IN THEIR ROCKET-RACER.



THESE FAMED FIVE WITH THE CRIMSON AVENGER AND THE VIGILANTE, KEEP THEIR DOUBTFUL APPOINTMENT...

MAYBE THIS IS THE HAND'S IDEA OF A JOKE!

FORSOOTH, I WOULD MEET THIS ARCH-VILLAIN!

PROMPTLY AT TEN, THE LIGHTS DIM--- THE GRINNING FACE APPEARS ON A PREPARED SCREEN--- A VOICE BOOMS OUT...

GENTLEMEN, YOU WILL UNDERSTAND, I AM SURE, WHY I DO NOT COME BEFORE YOU IN PERSON! I AM ABOUT TO BECOME, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE, AN INFORMER!

YOU ARE AWARE THAT FIVE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS CRIMINALS ON EARTH ARE AT LARGE TODAY. IT IS MY PURPOSE TO TELL YOU WHERE THEY ARE, SO THAT YOU MAY GO AFTER THEM IF YOU WISH...

THE RED DRAGON IS IN THE VALLEY OF WAMONA. BIG CAESAR HAS RETURNED TO THE TIMES SQUARE DISTRICT. PROFESSOR MERLIN IS IN DEATH VALLEY, THE DUMMY IN HOLLYWOOD, THE NEEDLE IN THE CANAL ZONE... THERE, GENTLEMEN, IS OPPOSITION ENOUGH FOR YOU!

AS THE IMAGE FADES...

TRICK OR NOT, I THINK IT'S OUR DUTY TO INVESTIGATE! SPEEDY AND I WILL GO TO DEATH VALLEY TO LOOK FOR MERLIN!

I'M WITH YOU, ONLY I'LL GO ON TO HOLLYWOOD, TO SEE WHAT THE DUMMY'S UP TO!

STRIPEY AND I'VE TANGLED WITH THE NEEDLE BEFORE, SO WE'LL CHOOSE HIM!

ME FOR TIMES SQUARE! I'LL TAKE BIG CAESAR!

METHINKS A JOUST WITH THE RED DRAGON WOULD REMIND ME OF THE GOOD OLD DAYS!

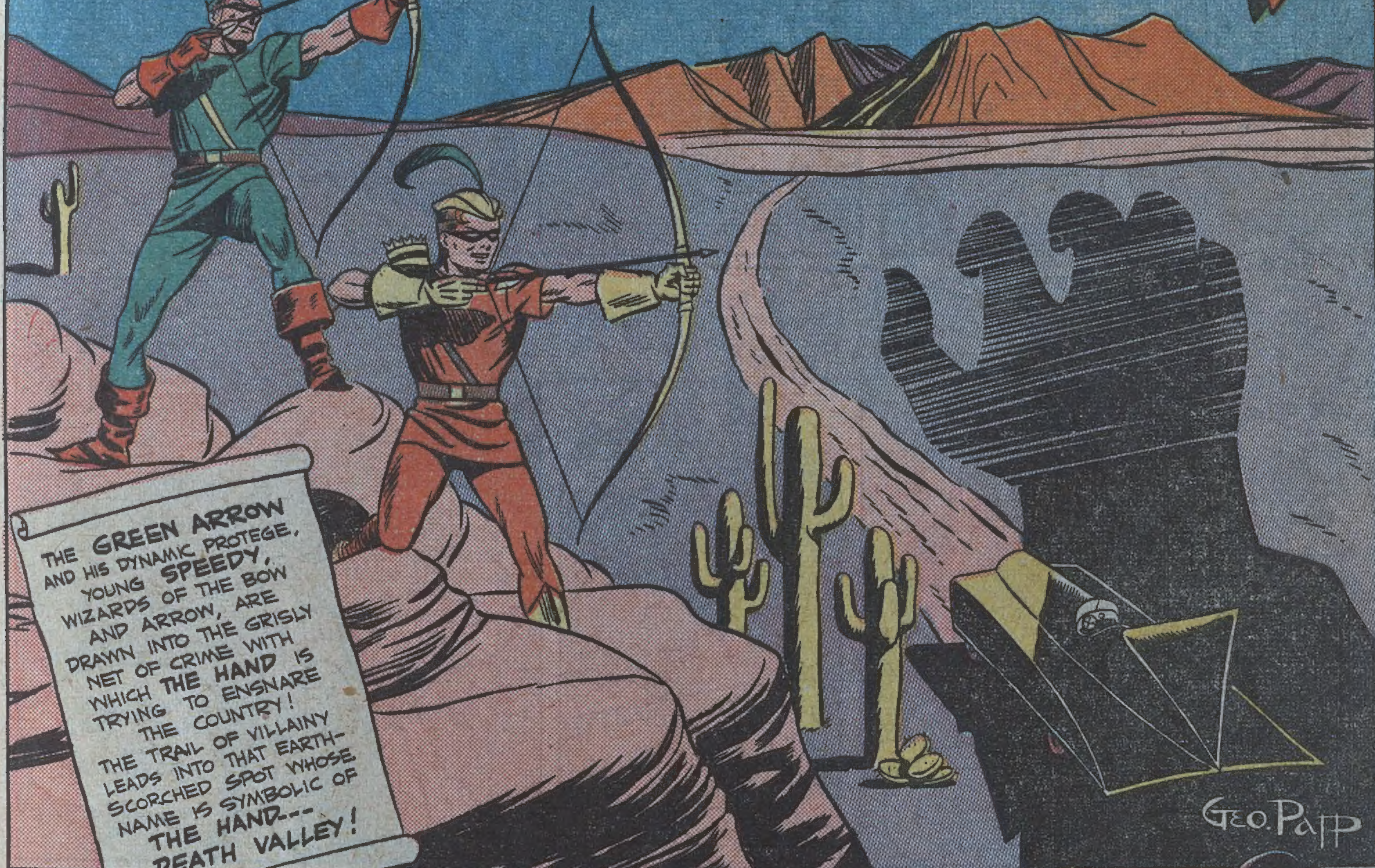
AND I OFFER A SLOGAN FOR EACH OF US TO CARRY IN HIS HEART DURING THE PERILOUS DAYS AHEAD: WOE TO ALL WORKERS OF EVIL!

FELLOW CRIME FIGHTERS, BEHIND THIS STRANGE MEETING MAY LIE A MORE SINISTER SCHEME THAN ANY OF US SUSPECTS! I MOVE WE MEET AGAIN IN THIS ROOM A WEEK FROM TONIGHT TO REPORT TO ONE ANOTHER, AND TO CONSIDER FURTHER THE PROBLEM OF THE HAND HIMSELF!

BRAVO!

HEAR... HEAR!

The GREEN ARROW



THE ARROWPLANE, THAT SUPER-MOTORCAR OF BLINDING SPEED, CARRIES THE GREEN ARROW AND HIS NERVY YOUNG PARTNER TO THEIR RENDEZVOUS WITH CRIME!

I HOPE WE CAN TAKE PROFESSOR MERLIN BY SURPRISE!

I'VE A HUNCH THE HAND MAY HAVE TOLD MERLIN TO EXPECT US! WE MAY BE DRIVING INTO A TRAP, SPEEDY!

MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT... LOOK!

THAT'S FINE! THE SHOW'LL START ANY SECOND NOW!

HIGH ABOVE THE WHIZZING CAR----



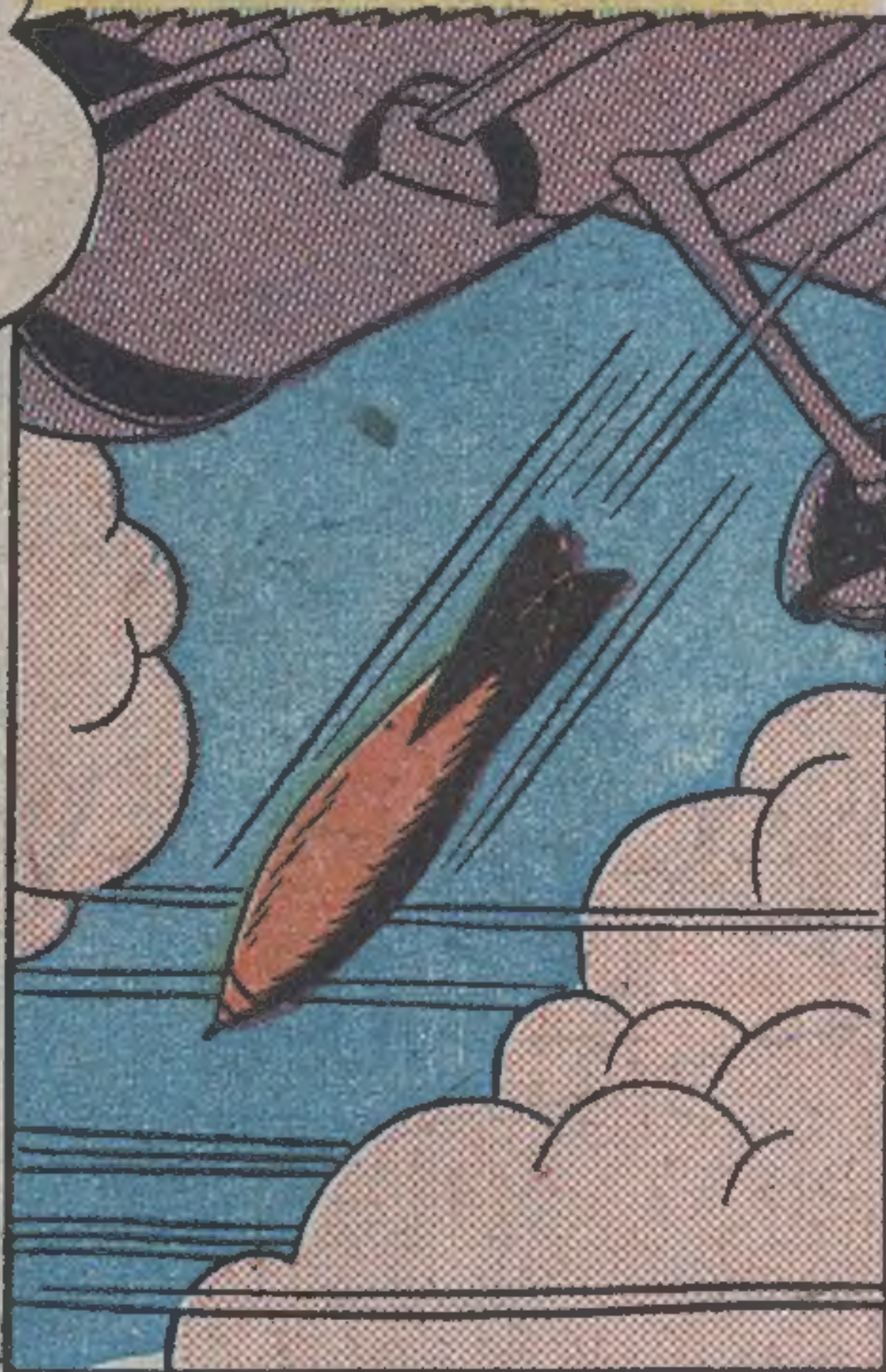
INSIDE THE SINISTER AIRCRAFT....

AH! A SPLENDID TARGET! I WOULD ALMOST PREFER TO MATCH WITS WITH THE GREEN ARROW, BUT THIS IS THE SAFEST WAY!

LET 'ER GO, CHIEF! THAT RADIO-CONTROLLED BOMB COULD HIT THE HOLE IN A DOUGHNUT AT THIS ALTITUDE!

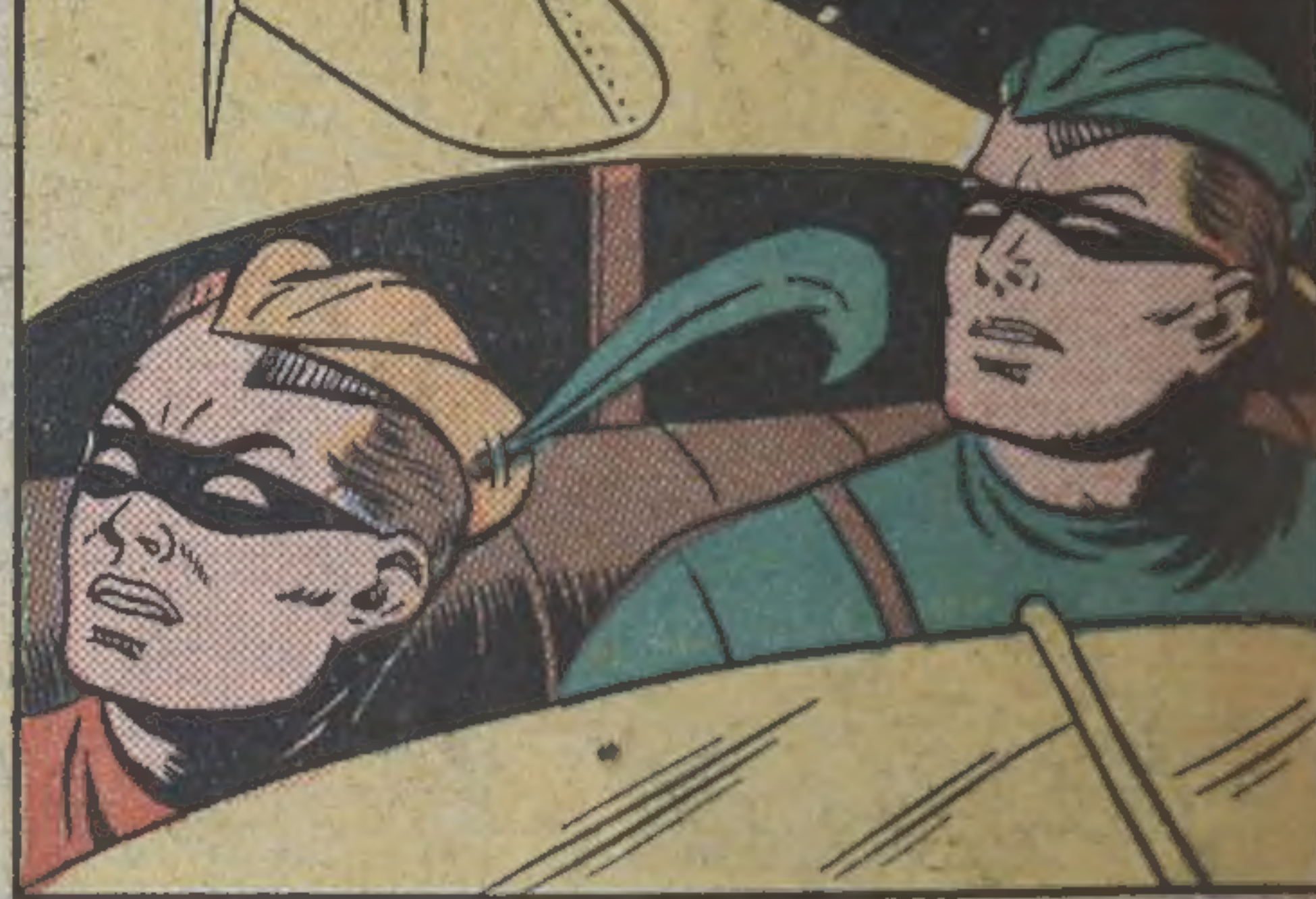


MERLIN YANKS THE LEVER AND THE GRIM MESSENGER OF DEATH HURTLES EARTHWARD!



WOW!
THE BIG BIRD LAID AN EGG!

HOLD TIGHT!
YOU'LL HEAR IT CACKLE IN A SECOND!



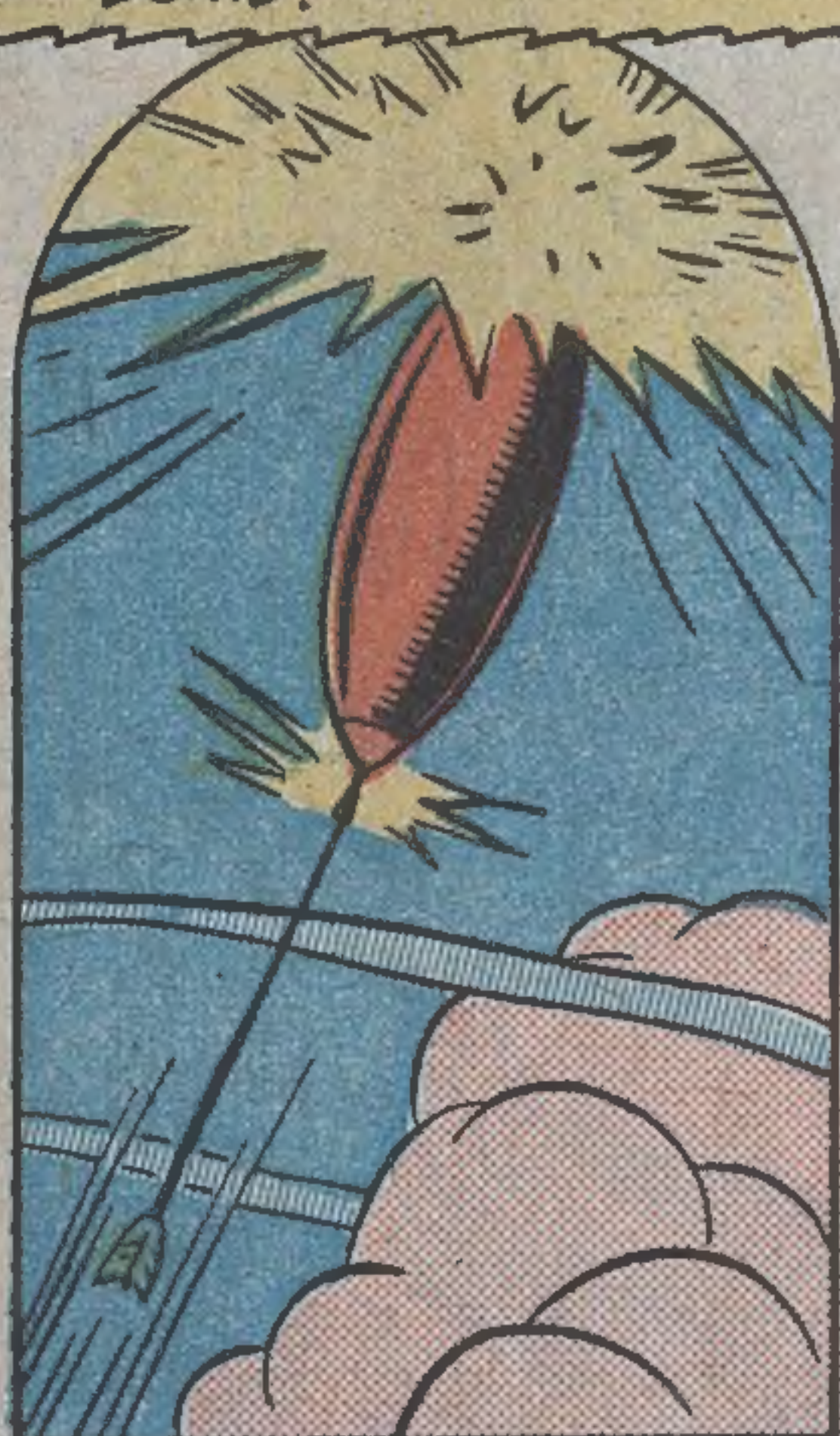
STANDING IN THE CAR AND STEERING WITH HIS KNEES, THE GREEN ARROW FIRES A SHAFTH WITH INCREDIBLE POWER AND SPEED!

THIS'LL HATCH THEIR EGG!



I'LL TAKE MINE SCRAMBLED, PLEASE!

THE POINT OF THE ARROW CRASHES AGAINST THE DETONATOR OF THE BOMB!



NOW HE'S UP TO SOMETHING ELSE! I DON'T LIKE THE SOUND OF IT!

THAT GUY MUST THINK HE'S A PRIZE HEN!

A BLOOD-CHILLING SIGHT LOOMS JUST AHEAD---

HE'S BLOWN UP THE BRIDGE ACROSS THE CANYON! NO TIME FOR A DETOUR!

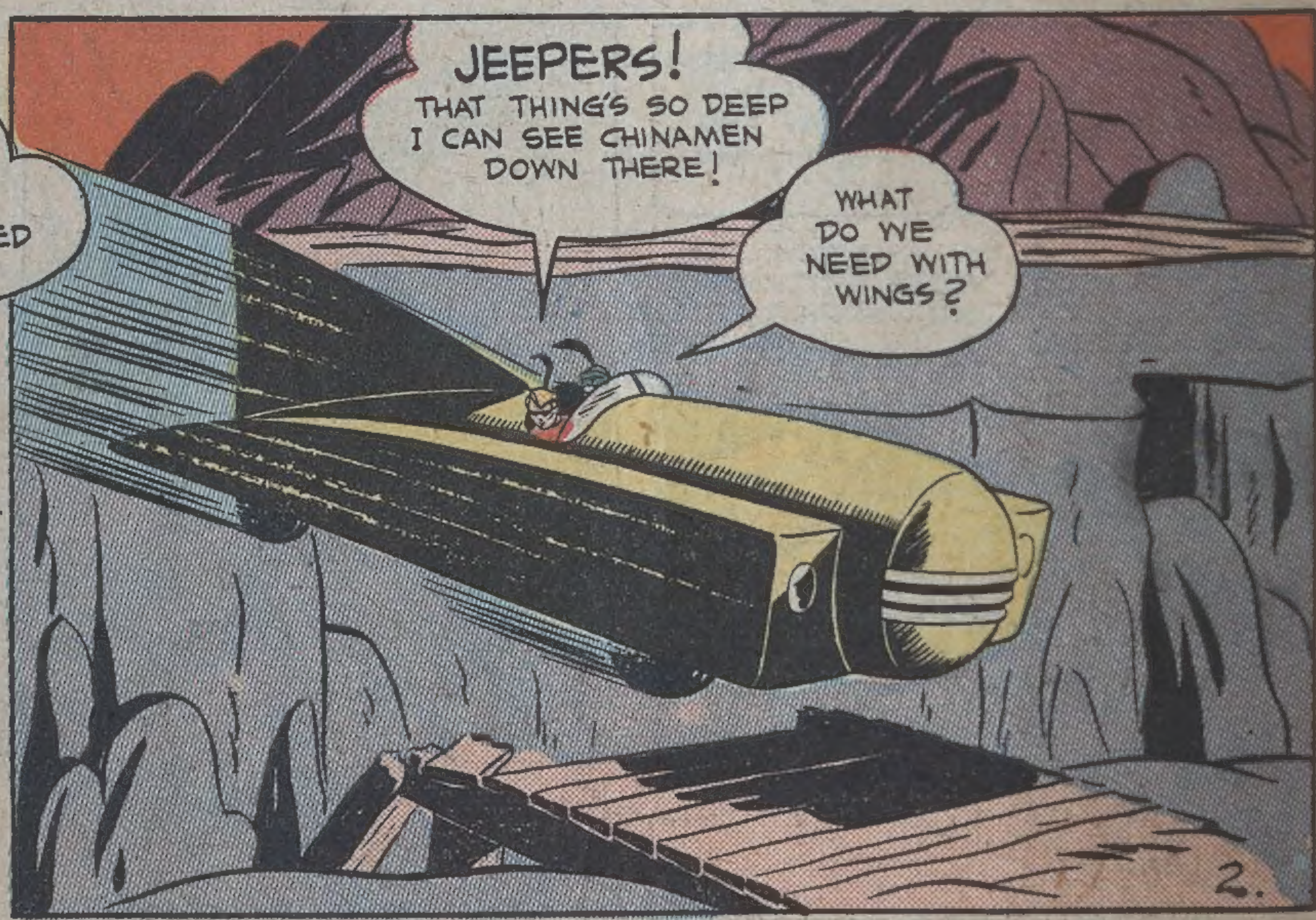
GIVE 'ER THE GUN! I'VE GOT MY EARS TUCKED IN!

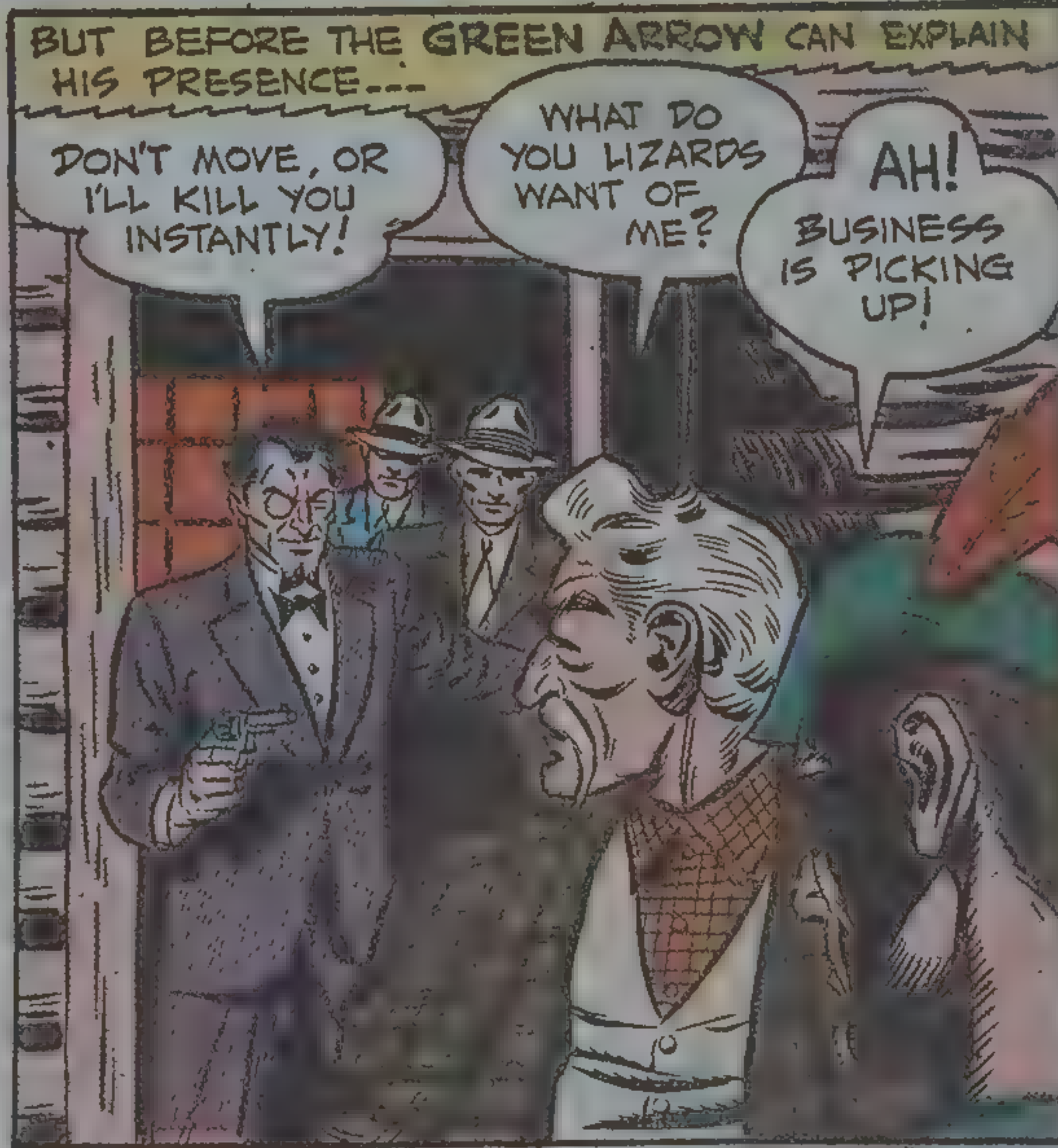
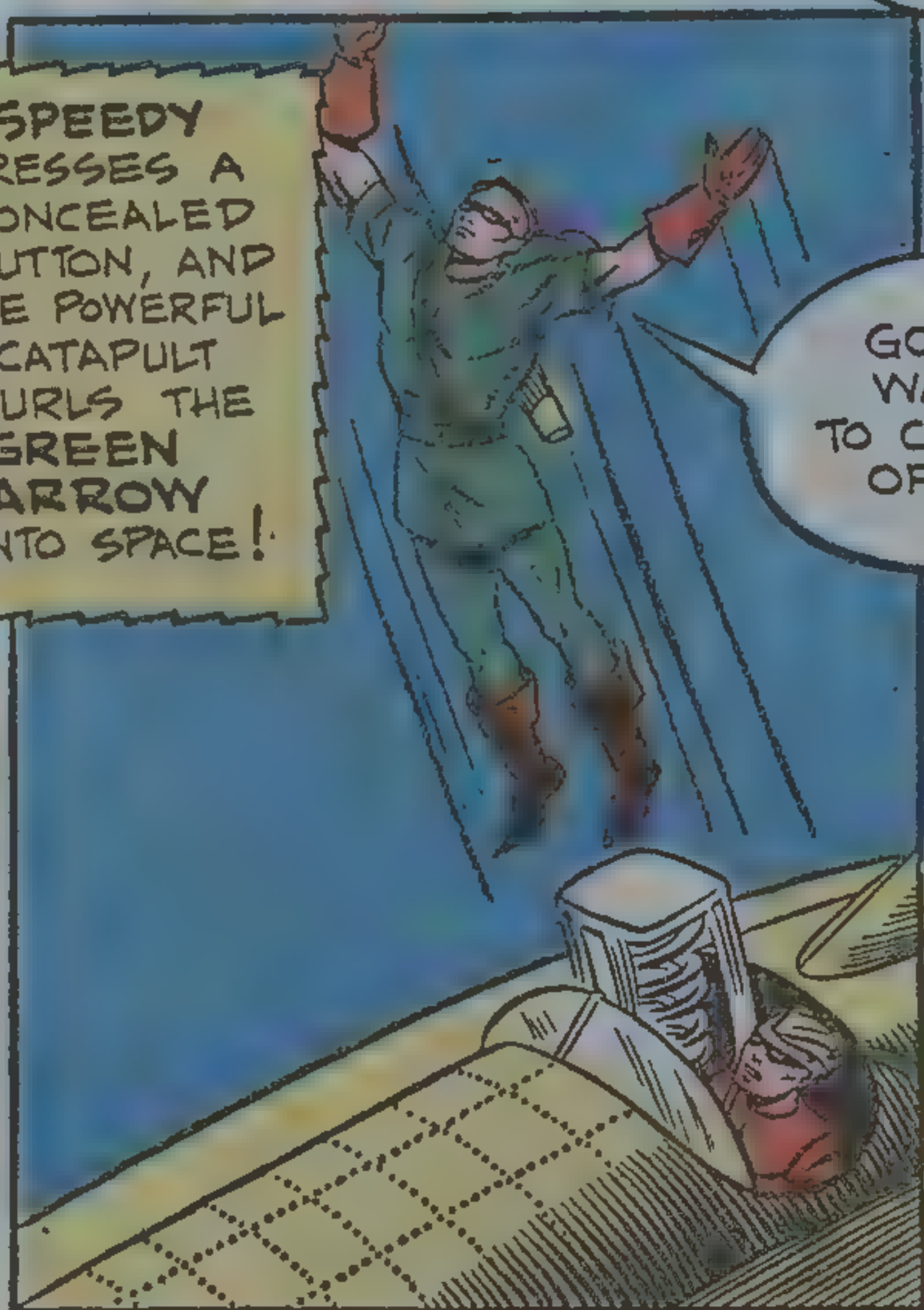
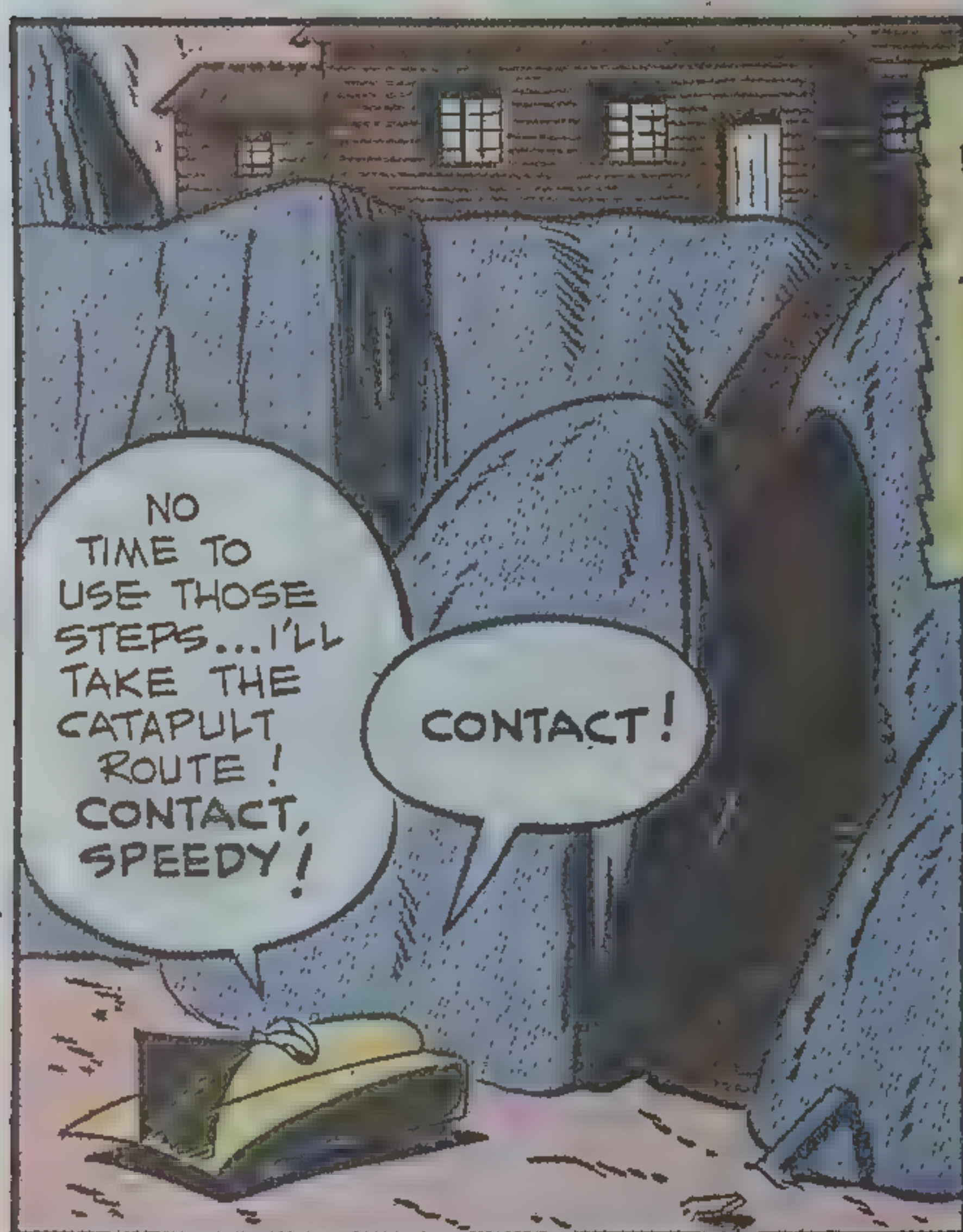
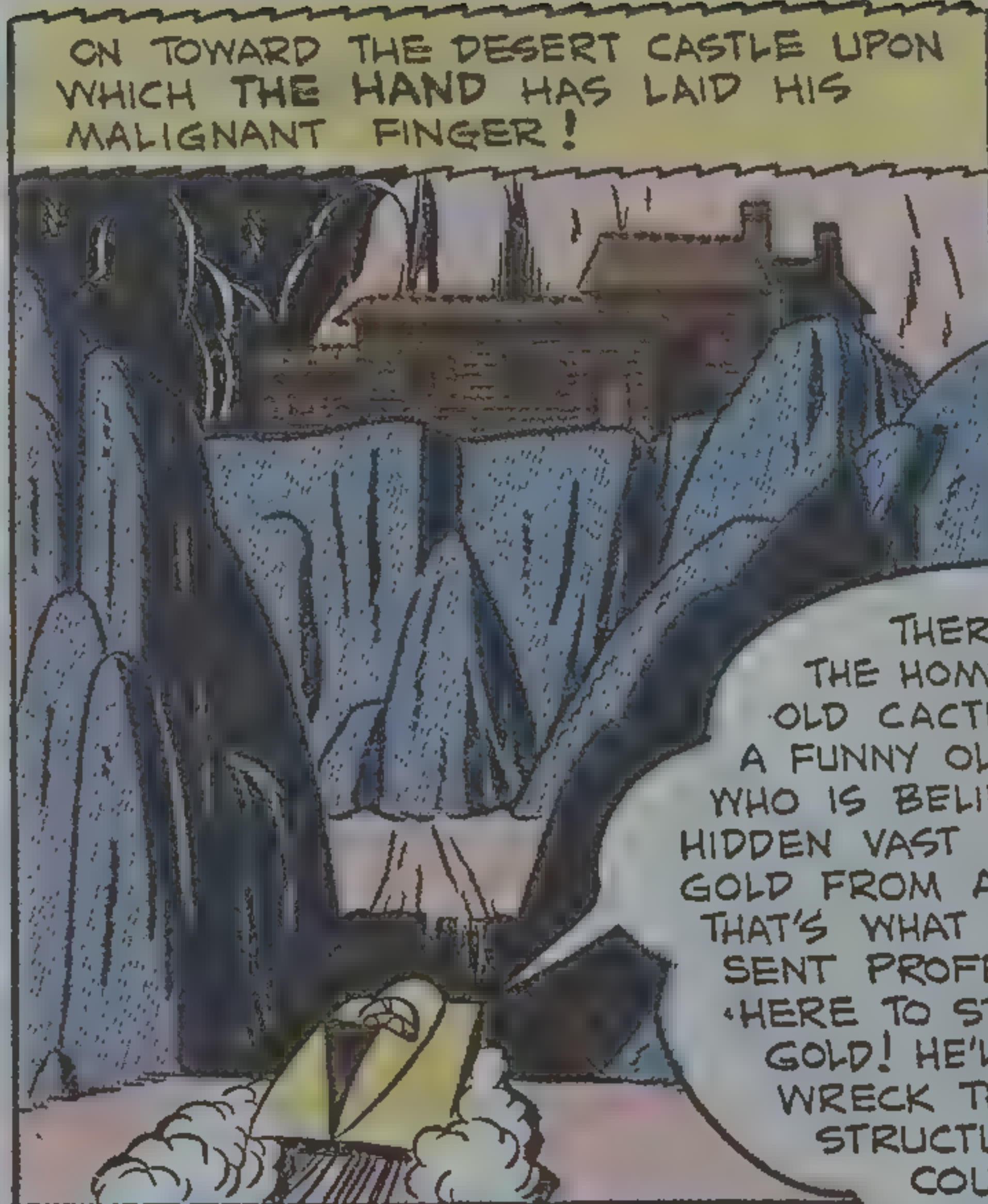


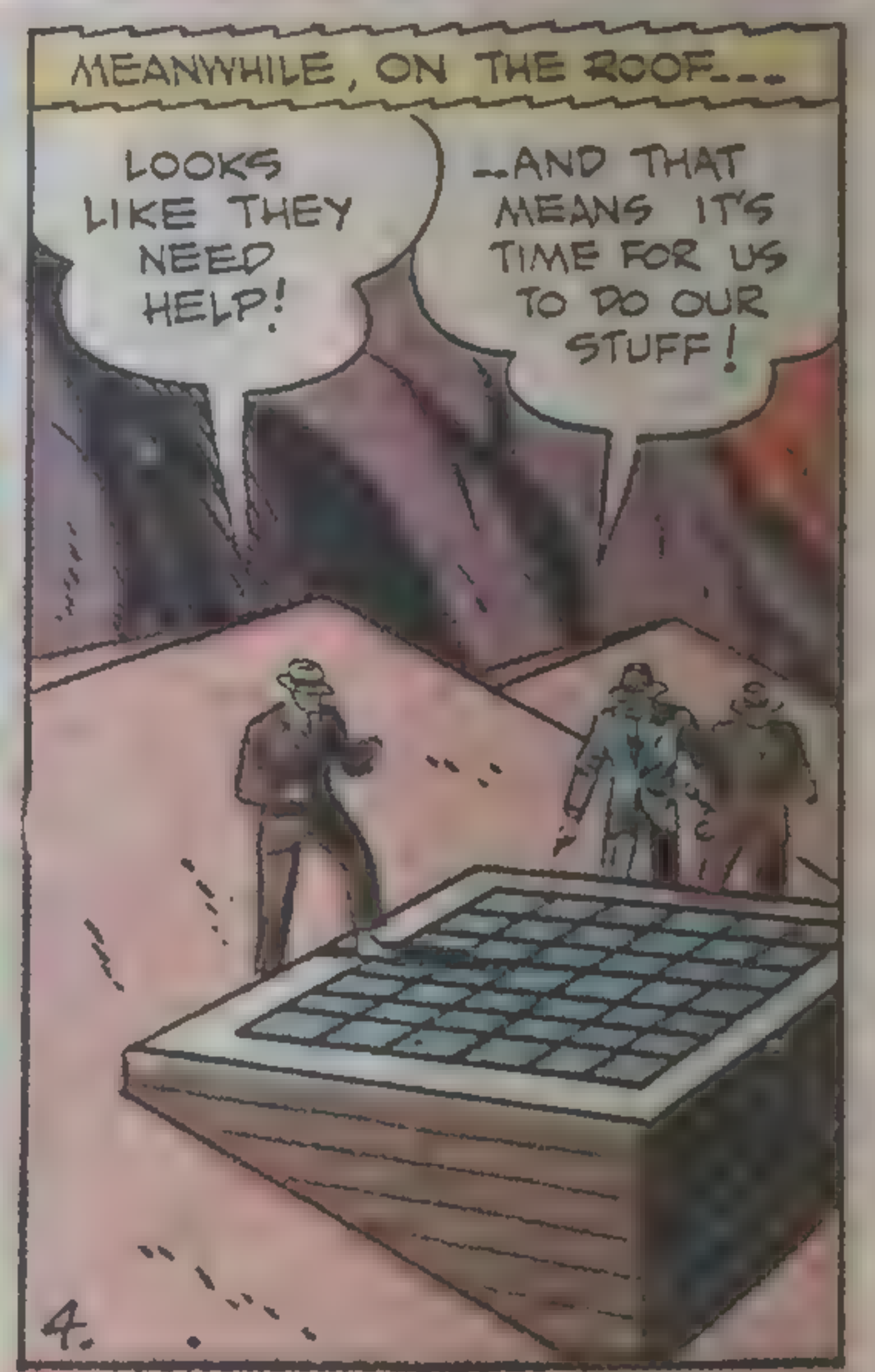
JEEPERS!

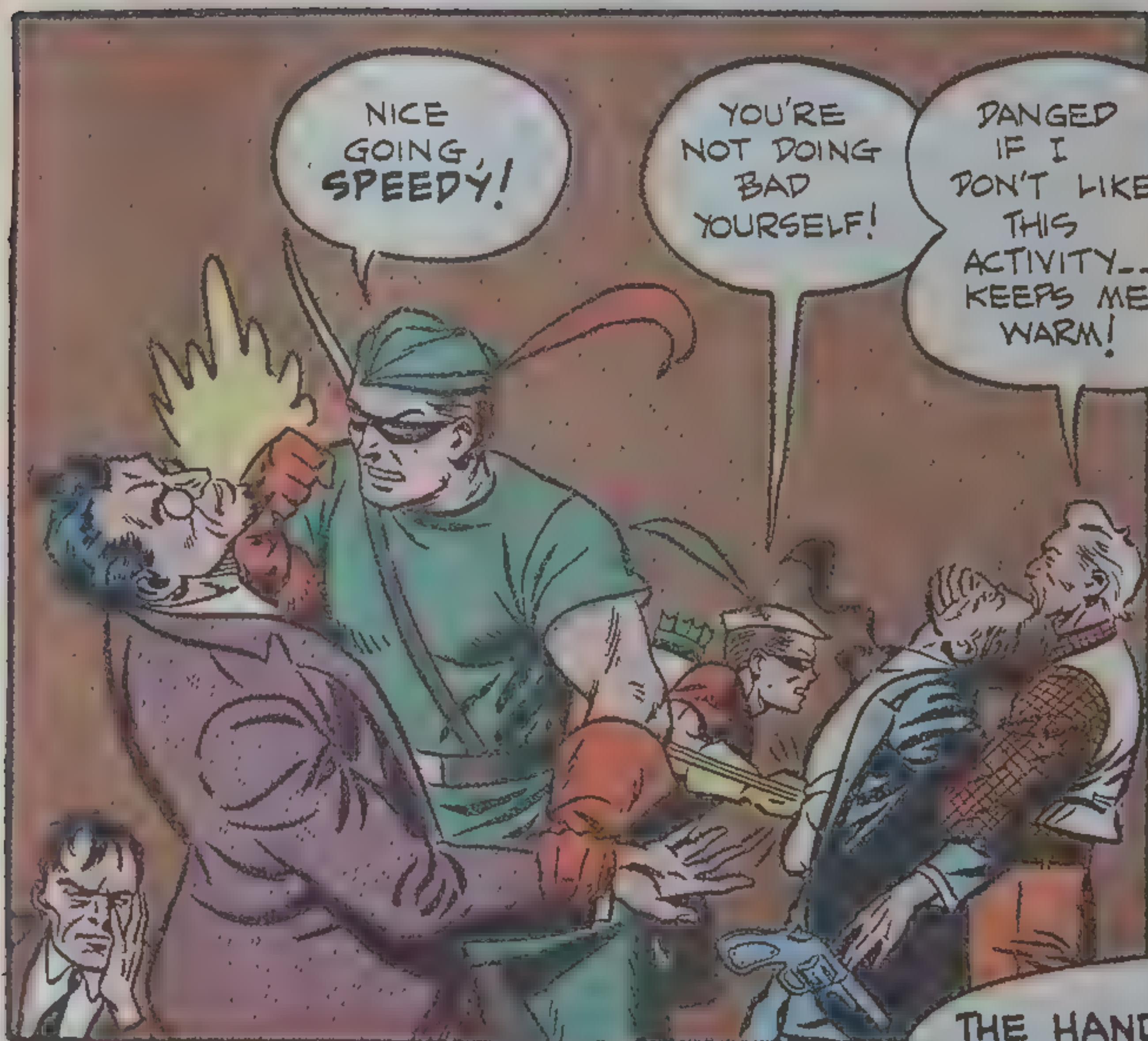
THAT THING'S SO DEEP I CAN SEE CHINAMEN DOWN THERE!

WHAT DO WE NEED WITH WINGS?









NICE GOING, SPEEDY!

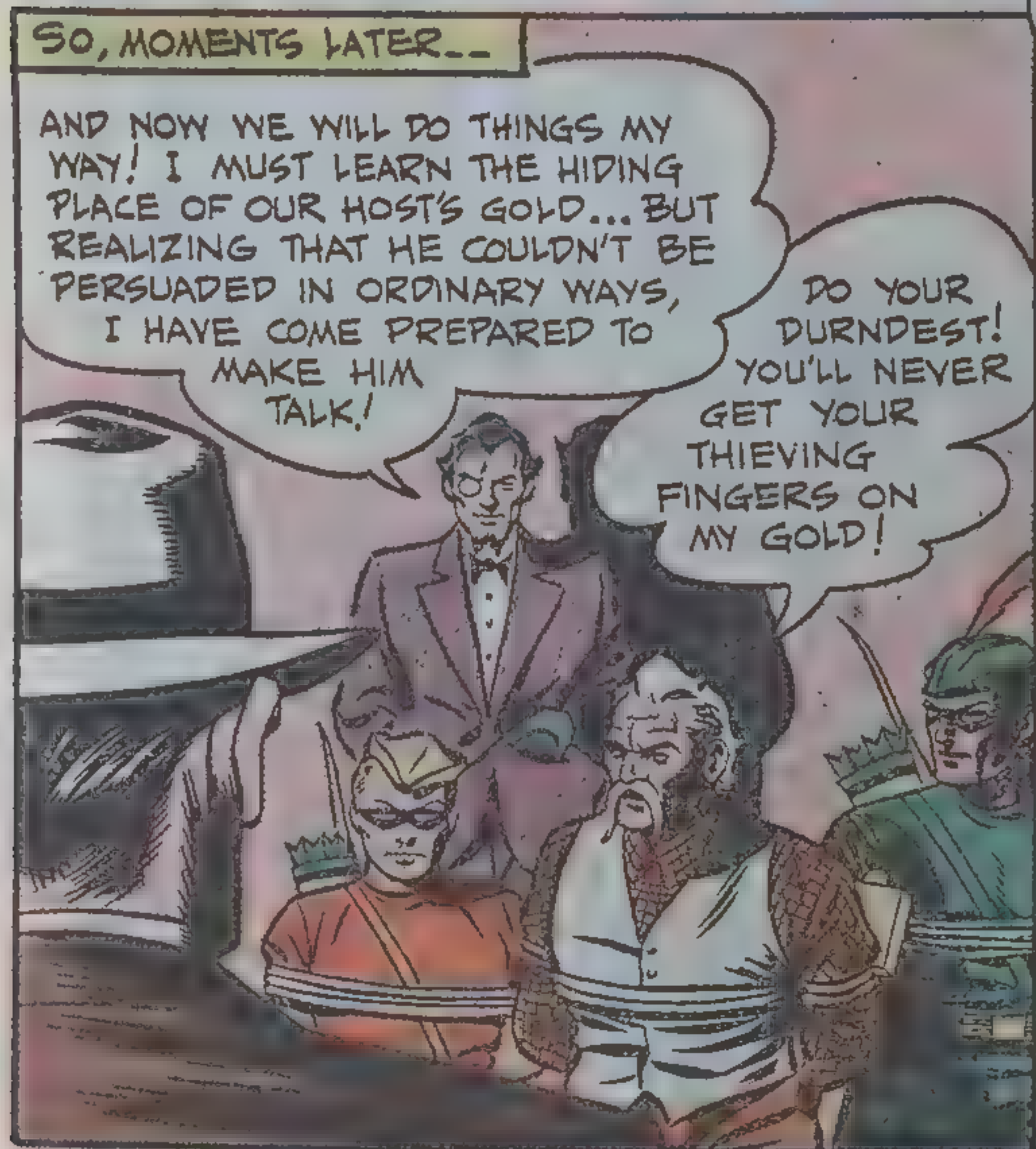
YOU'RE NOT DOING BAD YOURSELF!

DANGER IF I DON'T LIKE THIS ACTIVITY... KEEPS ME WARM!



THIS'LL STOP YOU, BRAT!

HOLD STILL, YOU OLD WALRUS, UNLESS YOU WANT YOUR SKULL DENTED IN WITH A PISTOL BUTT!



SO, MOMENTS LATER...

AND NOW WE WILL DO THINGS MY WAY! I MUST LEARN THE HIDING PLACE OF OUR HOST'S GOLD... BUT REALIZING THAT HE COULDN'T BE PERSUADED IN ORDINARY WAYS, I HAVE COME PREPARED TO MAKE HIM TALK!

DO YOUR DUTY! YOU'LL NEVER GET YOUR THIEVING FINGERS ON MY GOLD!

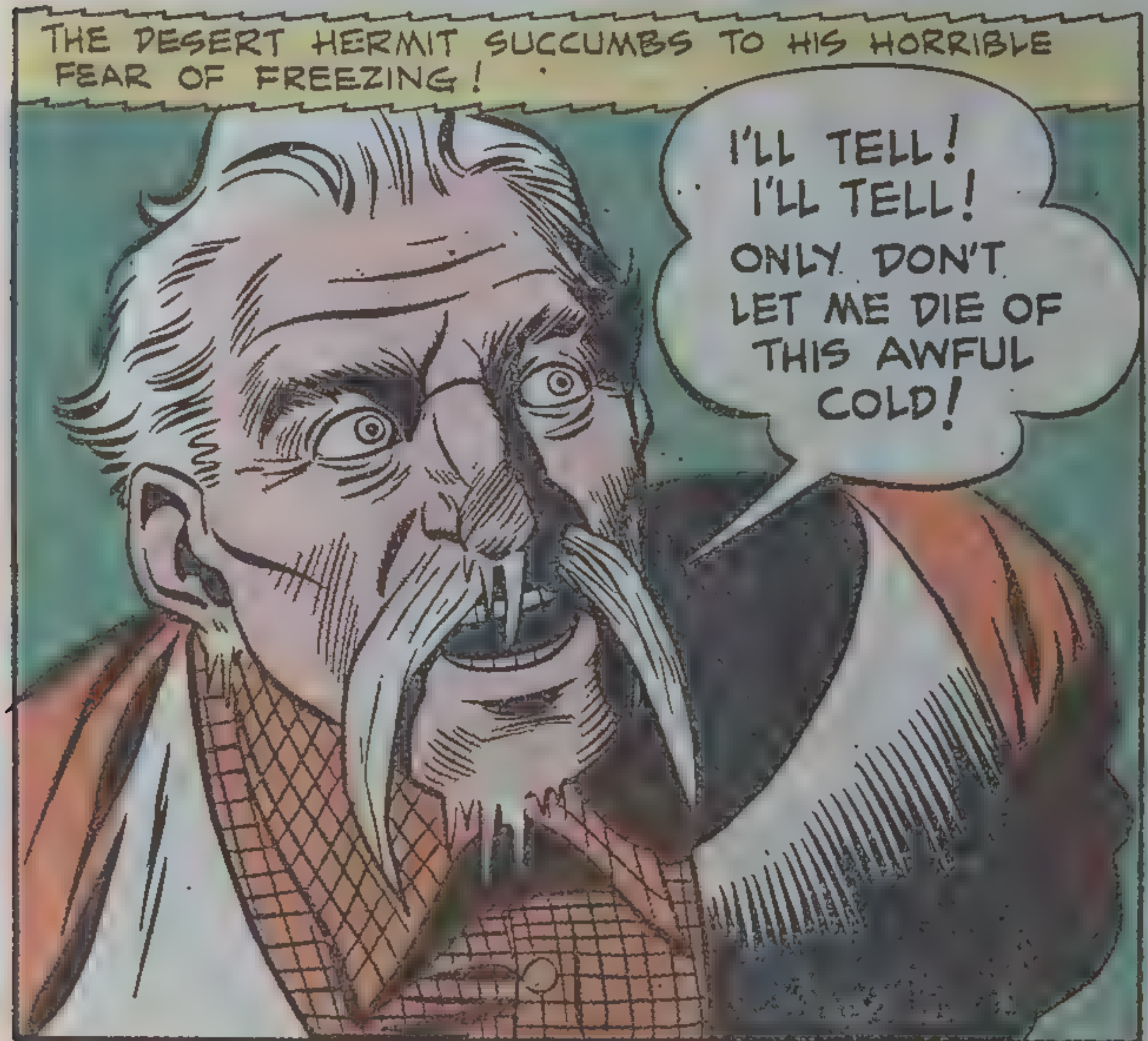
THE HAND HAS LONG BEEN AWARE OF CACTUS MIKE'S UNNATURAL TERROR OF FREEZING... WE HAVE A SMALL MACHINE, WHICH, BY A SECRET DEVICE, WILL LOWER THE TEMPERATURE IN THIS ROOM TO FIFTY BELOW ZERO!



PROFESSOR MERLIN DONS A SUIT OF THIN MATERIAL AND REMAINS ALONE TO OPERATE THE MACHINE OF CREEPING DEATH!! THE TEMPERATURE INCHES DOWN!

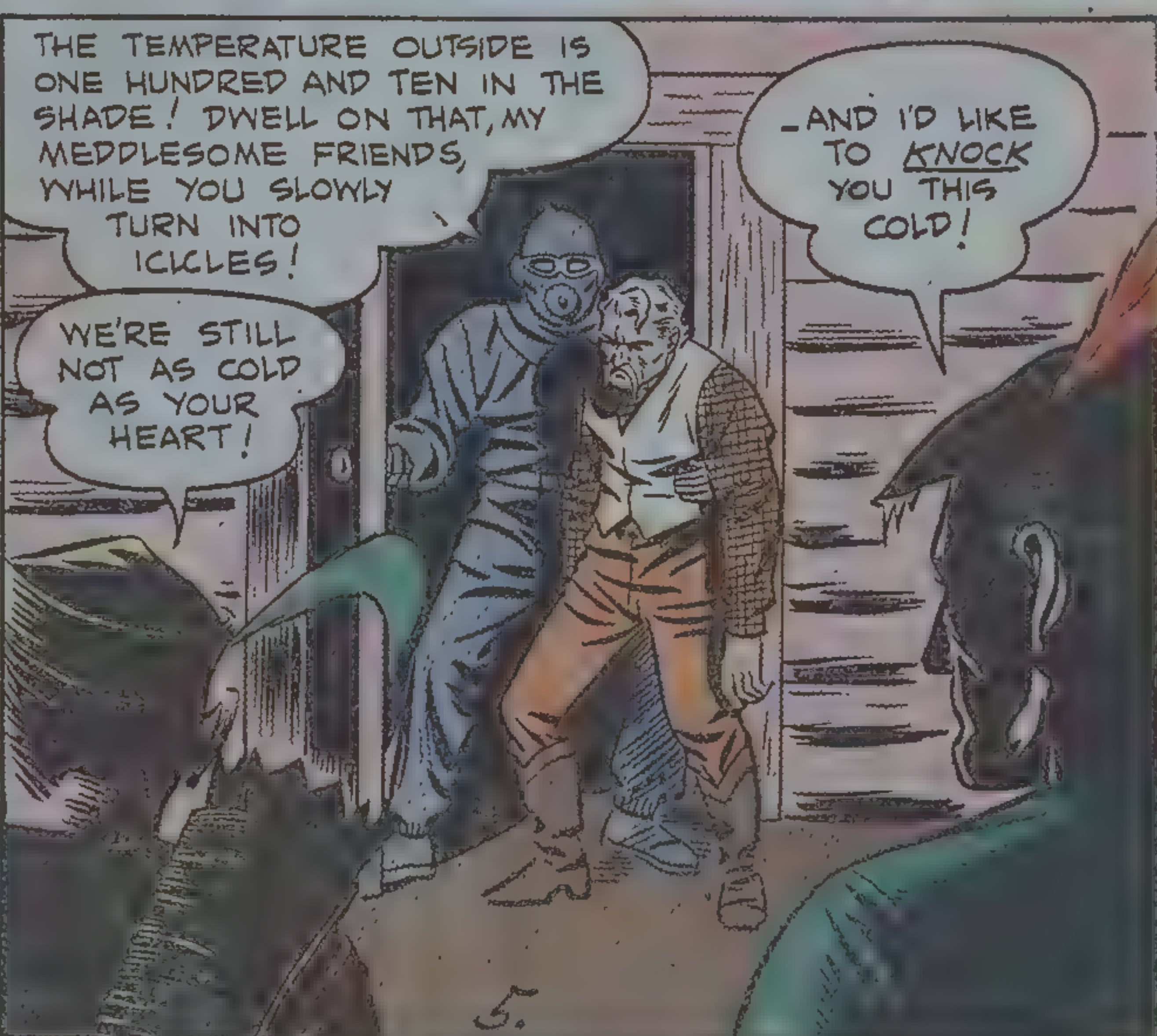


BETTER TALK BEFORE YOU'RE FROZEN STIFF! THE COLD CAN'T TOUCH ME... THIS SUIT IS HEATED BY ELECTRICITY!



THE DESERT HERMIT SUCCUMBS TO HIS HORRIBLE FEAR OF FREEZING!

I'LL TELL! I'LL TELL! ONLY DON'T LET ME DIE OF THIS AWFUL COLD!



THE TEMPERATURE OUTSIDE IS ONE HUNDRED AND TEN IN THE SHADE! DWELL ON THAT, MY MEDDLESOME FRIENDS, WHILE YOU SLOWLY TURN INTO ICICLES!

WE'RE STILL NOT AS COLD AS YOUR HEART!

-AND I'D LIKE TO KNOCK YOU THIS COLD!

BUT... CHILLED TO THE BONE, HALF DEAD WITH COLD, THEY FORCE THEIR NUMB MUSCLES INTO ACTION....

GLAD THE PROFESSOR DIDN'T KNOW ALL OUR TRICKS! READY, GREEN ARROW?

LET'S GO!

THERE, SPEEDY... THAT'S FOR THE FREEZING DEVICE!

— AND THAT'S FOR THE WINDOW!! WEATHER REPORT... FAIR AND WARMER!

THEN, MOMENTS LATER, THEY ROAR ONCE MORE THRU THE BLINDING HEAT OF THE DESERT, FOLLOWING THE PROFESSOR'S PLANE....

EDGING LABORIOUSLY TO THE WINDOW, THE GREEN ARROW AND SPEEDY CUT THEIR BONDS WITH A SLIVER OF SHATTERED GLASS....

THEY'RE FORCING OLD MIKE TO DIRECT THEM TO HIS SECRET GOLD CACHE!

THE POOR OLD FELLOW MAY BE FLYING HIGH FOR THE LAST TIME!

IN THE PLANE—

THAT SHE IS... HALF WAY DOWN THE CANYON YONDER... THE ENTRANCE TO THE TUNNEL! THERE'S TONS OF IT! YOU SCORPIONS CAN NEVER HANDLE IT!

HAVE NO FEAR ON THAT SCORE... THE HAND HAS ARRANGED FOR EVERYTHING!

THE PLANE IS DEFTLY LANDED NEAR THE EDGE OF THE CANYON...

ALL RIGHT, BOYS... ALL OUT!

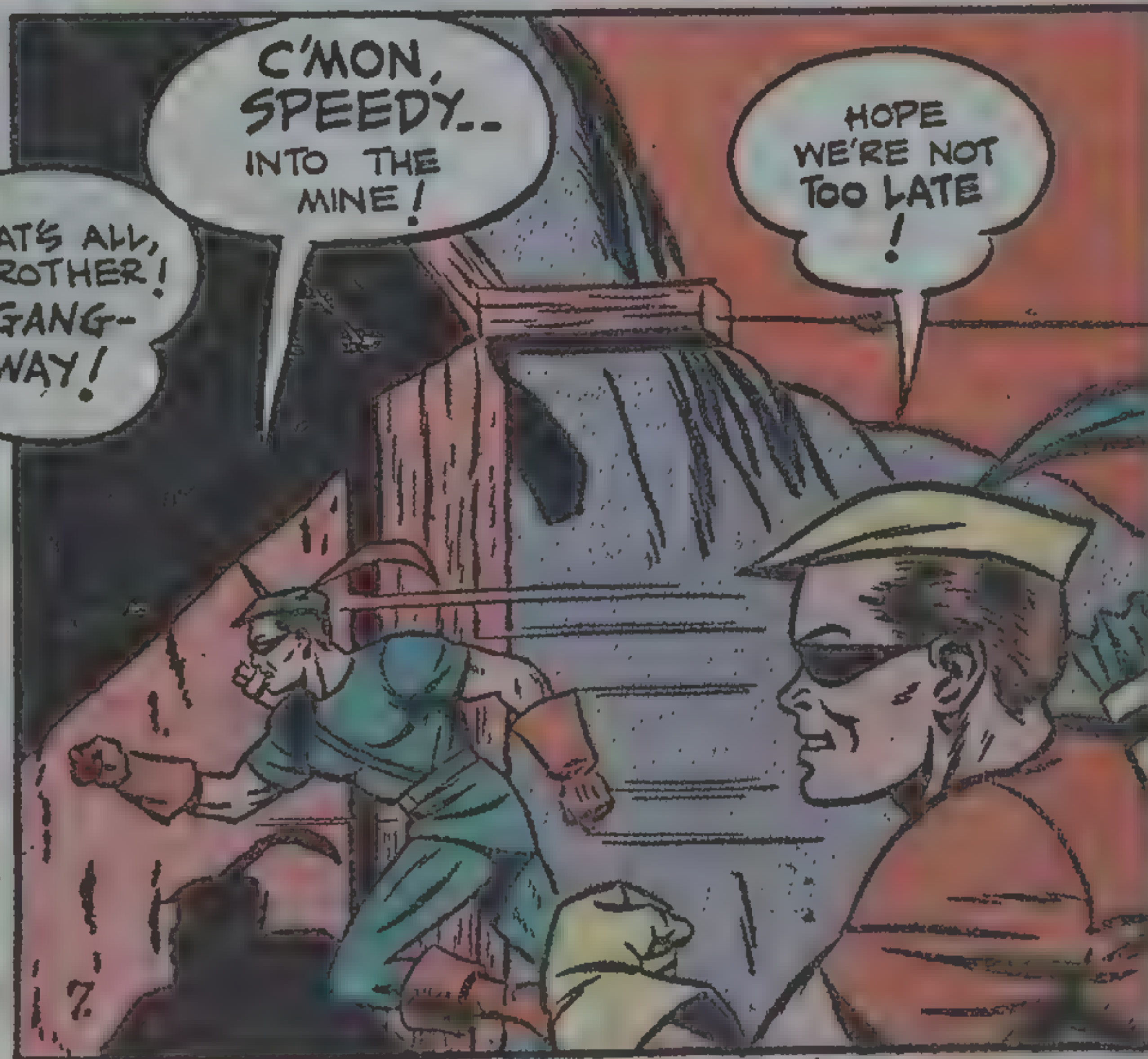
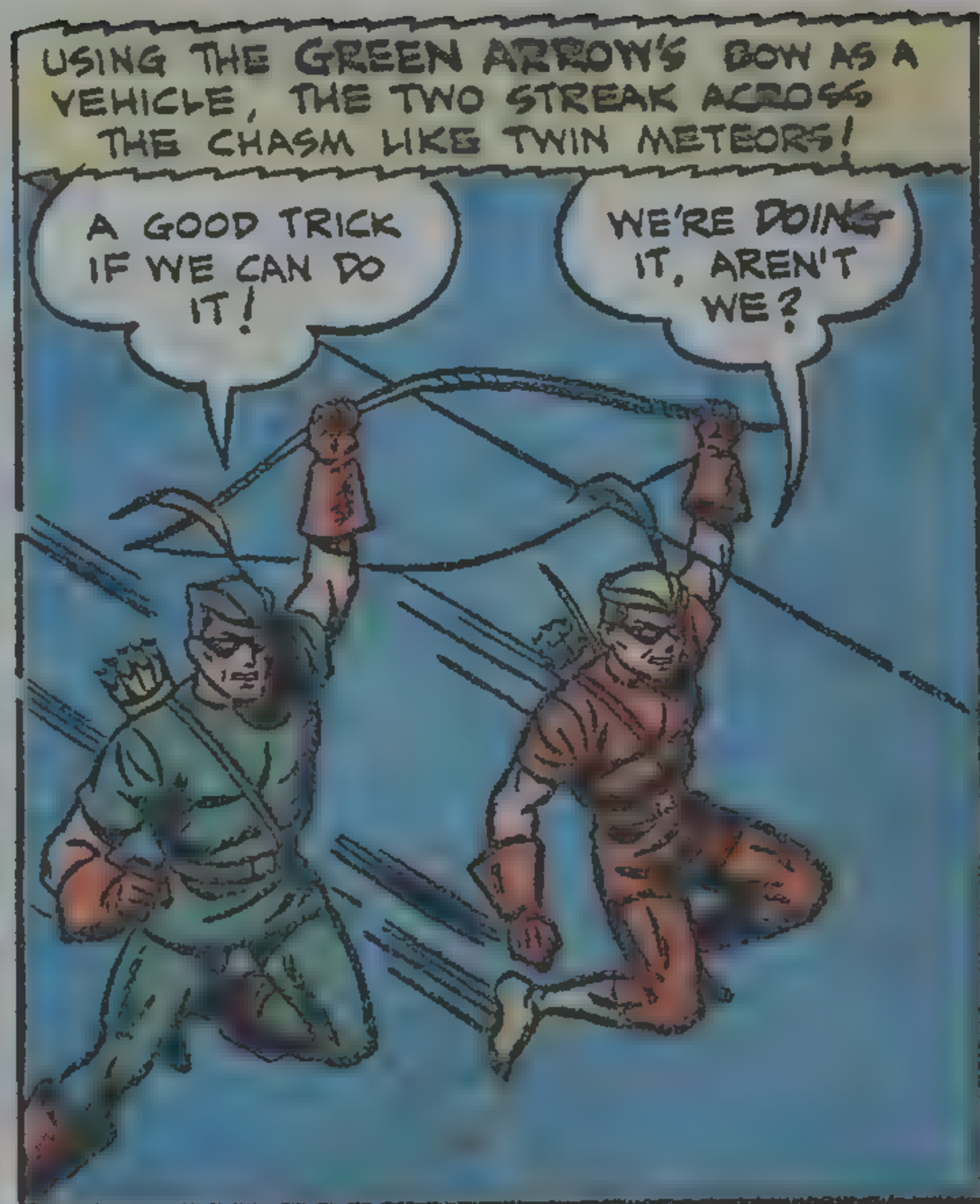
THIS CALLS FOR A CHANGE OF PLANS! THE ARROWPLANE CAN'T HOP THIS 'DITCH!

GOLLY, WHAT A GULLY!

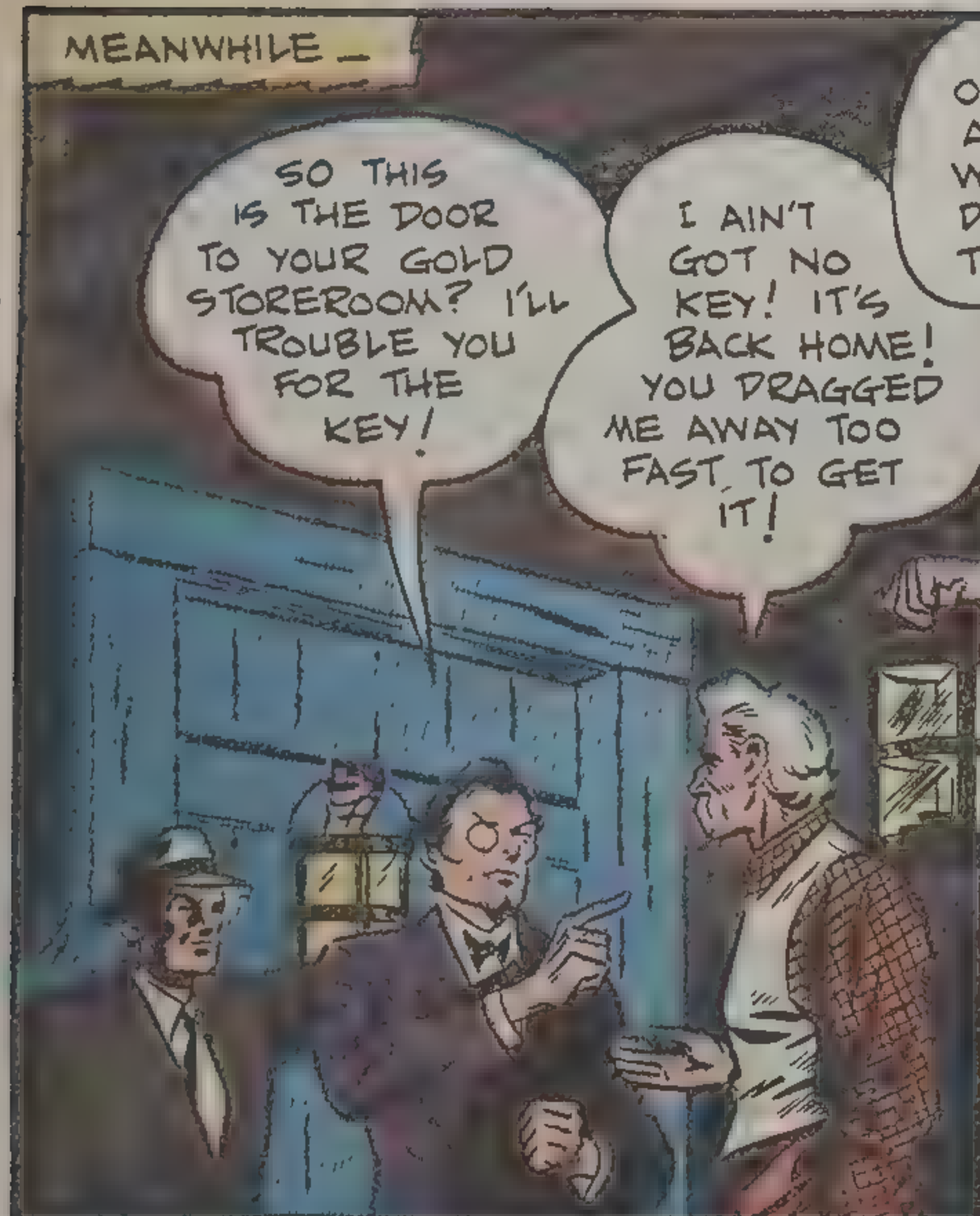
PROFESSOR MERLIN FORCES CACTUS MIKE AHEAD OF HIM INTO THE TUNNEL!

STAND GUARD! OUR WORK INSIDE WILL BE SWIFT, PLEASANT, AND PROFITABLE!

IT'S GOIN' TO BE COLD IN HERE!



MEANWHILE —



SO THIS IS THE DOOR TO YOUR GOLD STOREROOM? I'LL TROUBLE YOU FOR THE KEY!

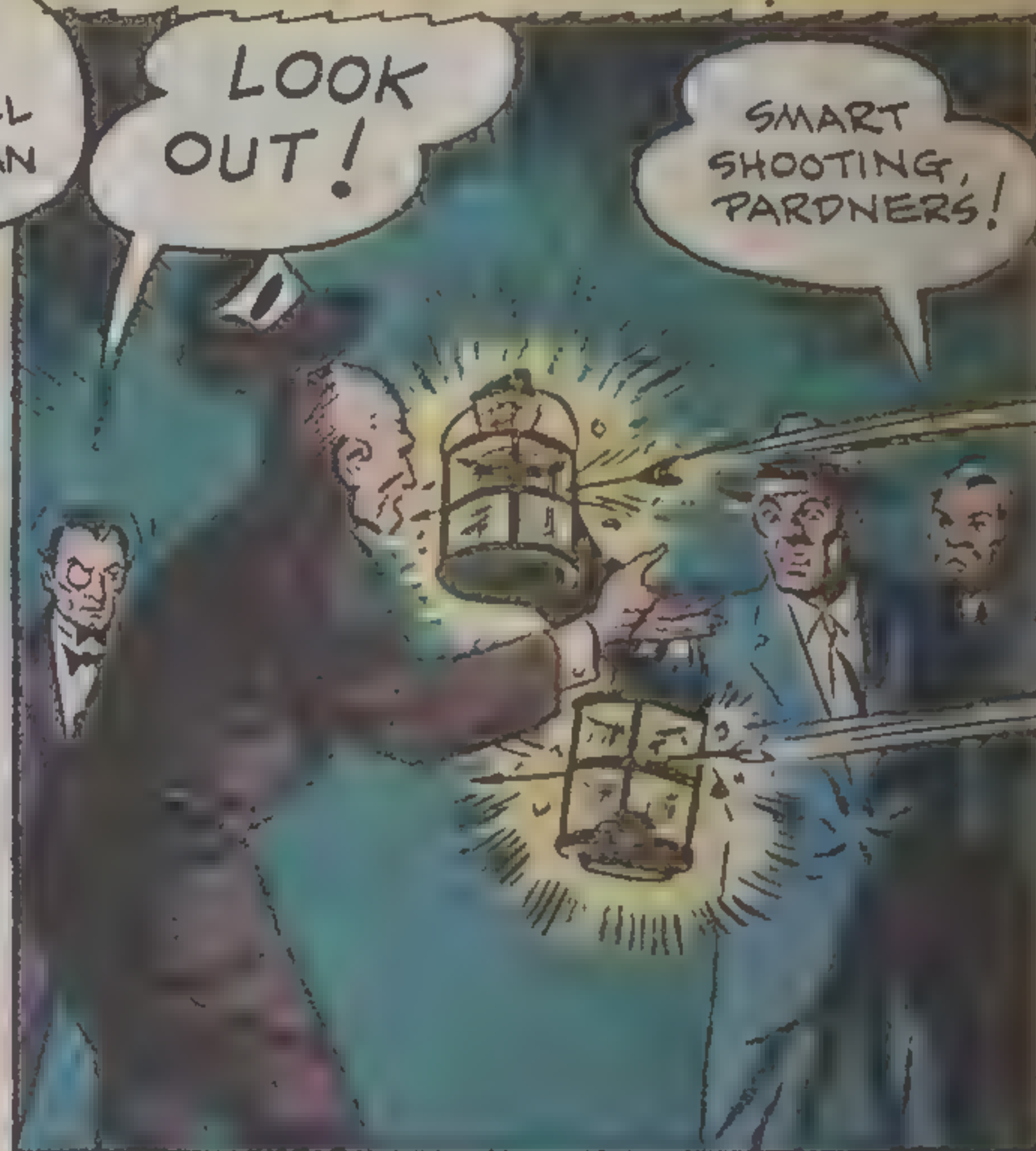
I AIN'T GOT NO KEY! IT'S BACK HOME! YOU DRAGGED ME AWAY TOO FAST TO GET IT!

A SMALL MATTER...A LIGHT CHARGE OF DYNAMITE WILL DO THE TRICK! AND YOU, CACTUS MIKE, WILL REMAIN BESIDE THE DYNAMITE TO SEE THAT IT GOES OFF PROPERLY!

SUITS ME, YOU WEASEL! IT'LL BE BETTER THAN FREEZIN' TO DEATH, AT THAT!



THEN, SEEMINGLY FROM NOWHERE, TWO ARROWS STREAK TOWARD THE CRIMINALS' TWO LANTERNS!



LOOK OUT!

SMART SHOOTING, PARTNERS!

PISTOLS BLAZE AS DARKNESS FLOODS THE TUNNEL!



COME ON, CACTUS MIKE! THIS WAY!

YOU'RE TELLIN' ME?

CACTUS MIKE, FAMILIAR WITH THE TUNNEL, LEADS HIS RESCUERS THROUGH THE INKY GLOOM....

I DUNNO WHO YOU TWO HOMBRES ARE, BUT YOU SHORE KNOW HOW TO HANDLE RATTLESNAKES! COME ON, I'LL HAVE YOU OUT OF HERE IN A HURRY!



WHILE BACK IN THE MINE...

IT IS FORTUNATE THAT I REMEMBERED TO BRING ALONG AN EXTRA LIGHT! NOW HURRY WITH THAT DYNAMITE! I MUST BE SURE THAT THE GOLD IS HERE! WE'LL ATTEND TO THE GREEN ARROW LATER!



MOMENTS LATER...A DULL "BOOM" ECHOES THROUGH THE OLD MINE-SHAFT!

THEM VOCO FOOLS HAVE TRIED TO DYNAMITE THE DOOR! THE ROTTEN TIMBERS OF THIS MINE COULD NEVER STAND IT! THEY'RE DEAD BY THIS TIME, AND WE'RE NEXT!

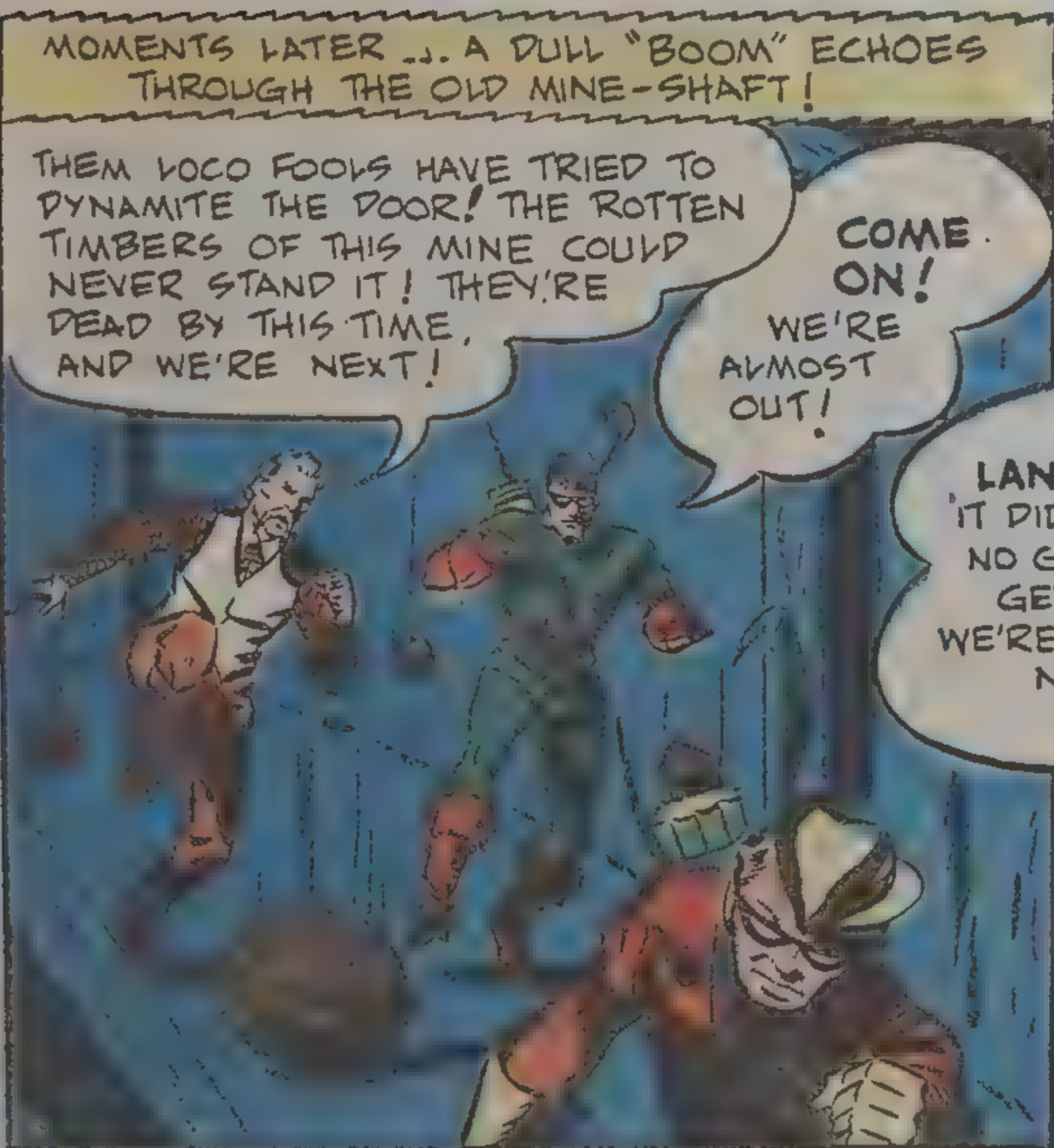
COME ON!

WE'RE ALMOST OUT!

A LANDSLIDE! IT DIDN'T DO US NO GOOD TO GET OUT! WE'RE GONERS NOW!

ANCHOR TO THAT CACTUS, SPEEDY!

RIGHT!

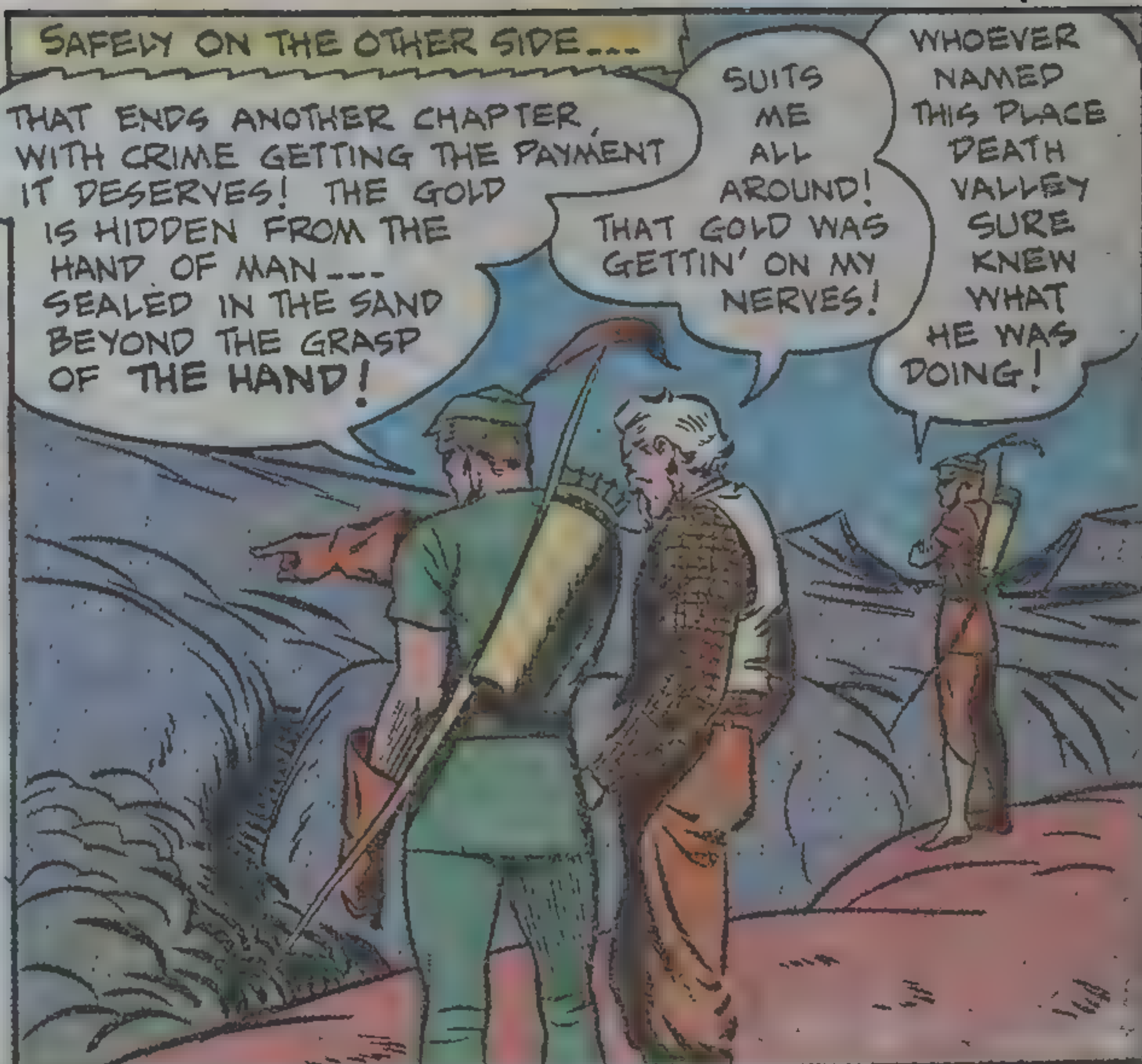




AND AS THE ALL-ENGULFING AVALANCHE THUNDERS DOWN, THE ARROW-LINE PROVIDES A MEANS OF ESCAPE!

YOU TWO GALOOTS ARE AS GOOD AS A PAIR OF ACES BACK TO BACK!

SWING YOUR PARTNER!



SAFELY ON THE OTHER SIDE...

THAT ENDS ANOTHER CHAPTER, WITH CRIME GETTING THE PAYMENT IT DESERVES! THE GOLD IS HIDDEN FROM THE HAND OF MAN --- SEALED IN THE SAND BEYOND THE GRASP OF THE HAND!

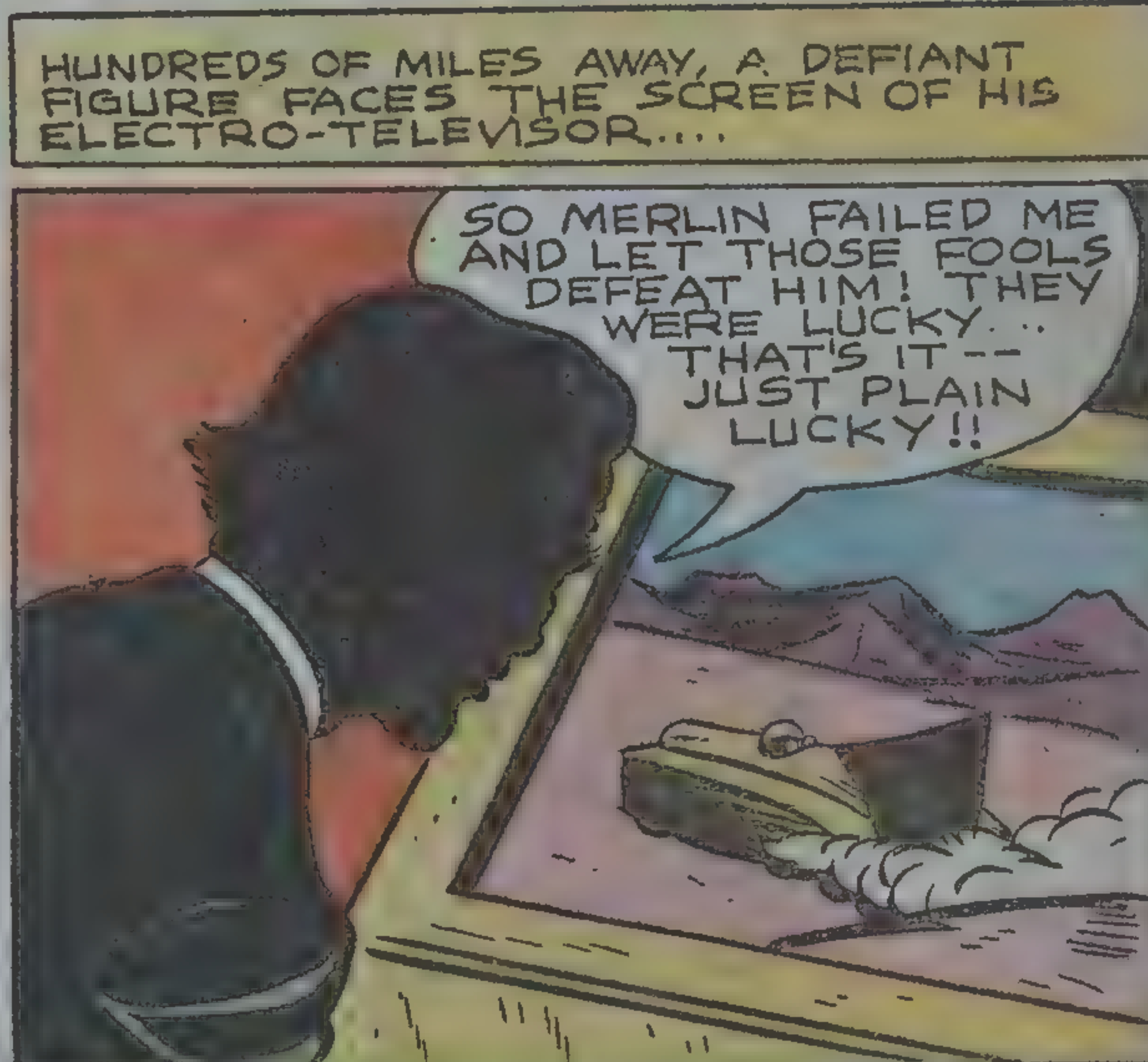
SUITS ME ALL AROUND! THAT GOLD WAS GETTIN' ON MY NERVES!

WHOEVER NAMED THIS PLACE DEATH VALLEY SURE KNEW WHAT HE WAS DOING!



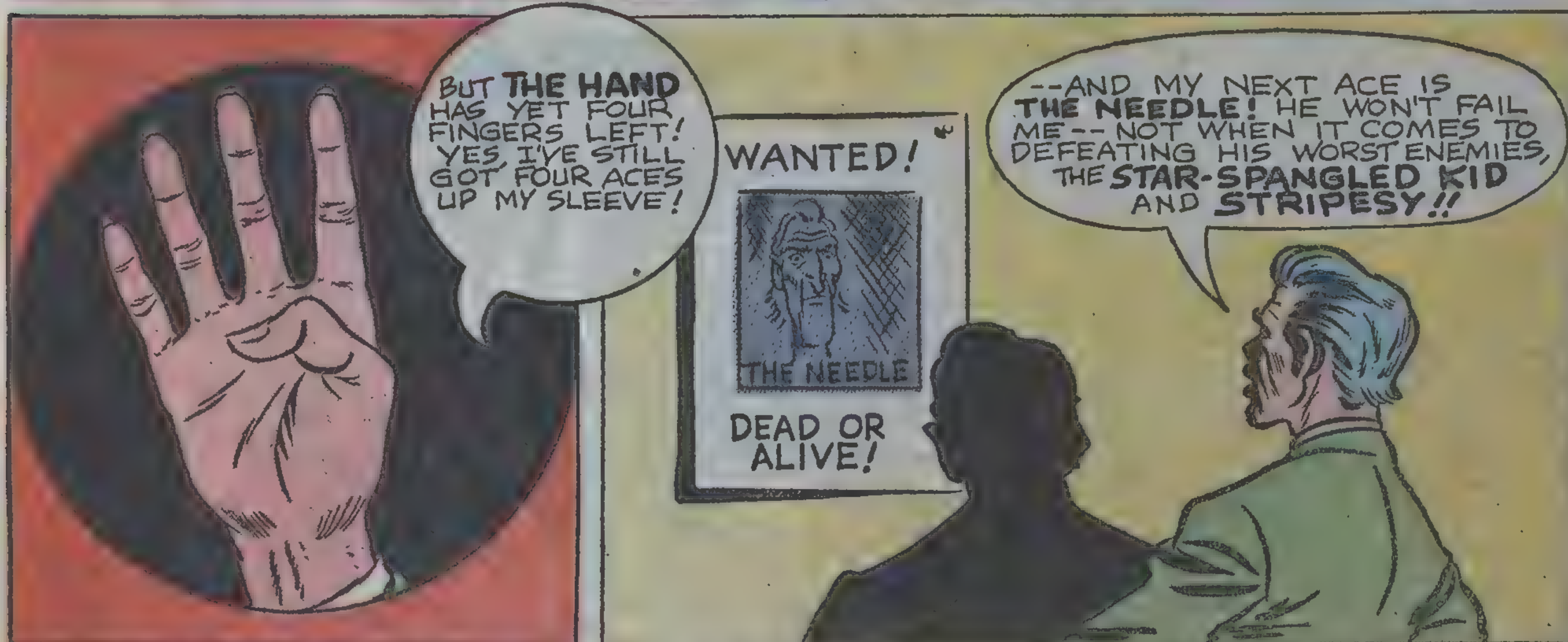
LATER --- AS THE WIZARD ARCHERS STREAK OFF INTO THE DISTANCE ---

BRRR...THE TEMPERATURE'S GETTIN' DOWN TO A HUNDRED AND TWENTY! I'LL HAVE TO BE GETTIN' BACK TO MY STOVE!



HUNDREDS OF MILES AWAY, A DEFIANT FIGURE FACES THE SCREEN OF HIS ELECTRO-TELEVISOR....

SO MERLIN FAILED ME AND LET THOSE FOOLS DEFEAT HIM! THEY WERE LUCKY... THAT'S IT -- JUST PLAIN LUCKY!!



BUT THE HAND HAS YET FOUR FINGERS LEFT! YES, I'VE STILL GOT FOUR ACES UP MY SLEEVE!

WANTED!



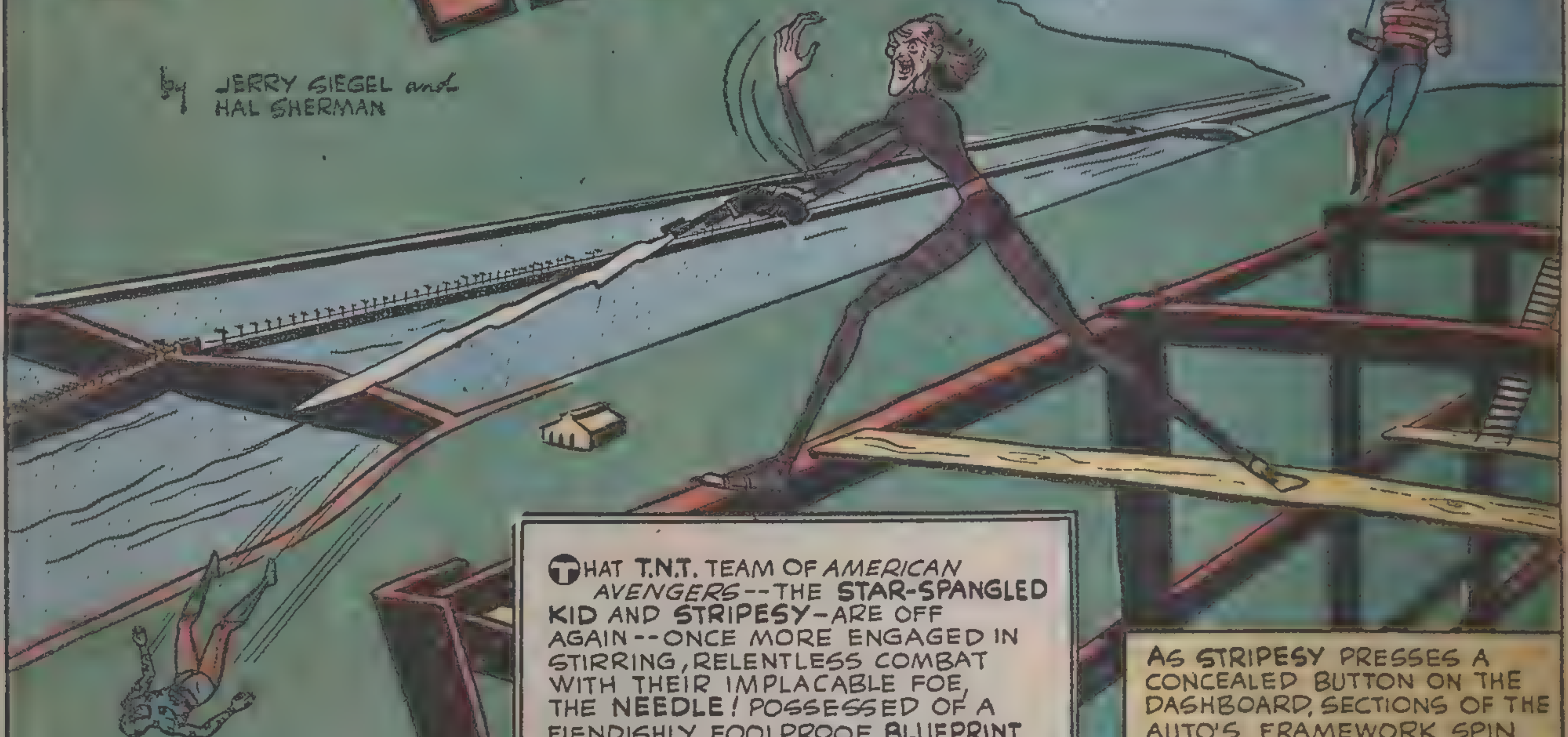
DEAD OR ALIVE!

--AND MY NEXT ACE IS THE NEEDLE! HE WON'T FAIL ME-- NOT WHEN IT COMES TO DEFEATING HIS WORST ENEMIES, THE STAR-SPANGLED KID AND STRIPESY!!

The GREEN ARROW hits the mark every month in MORE FUN COMICS

The STAR-SPANGLED KID

by JERRY SIEGEL and
HAL SHERMAN



THAT T.N.T. TEAM OF AMERICAN AVENGERS--THE STAR-SPANGLED KID AND STRIPESY--ARE OFF AGAIN--ONCE MORE ENGAGED IN STIRRING, RELENTLESS COMBAT WITH THEIR IMPLACABLE FOE, THE NEEDLE! POSSESSED OF A FIENDISHLY FOOLPROOF BLUEPRINT FOR BANDITRY PREPARED BY THAT KING OF KNAVES, THE HAND, IT SEEMS THAT THE TALL TOWER OF TREACHERY WILL HAVE SCANT OPPOSITION IN THIS THRILL-A-MOMENT DRAMA WHOSE SETTING IS LAID IN THE VERY SHADOWS OF A VITAL LINK IN OUR NATIONAL DEFENSE...THE PANAMA CANAL!!

OUTSIDE THE PRETENTIOUS PEMBERTON MANSION AS DUSK FALLS...

I STILL THINK SYLVESTER SHOULDN'T TAKE THIS VACATION TRIP TO PANAMA...BUT SINCE HE INSISTS, SEE THAT YOU TAKE GOOD CARE OF HIM, DUGAN!

IF MY PLANS MATERIALIZE, MOTHER, I SHALL RETURN WITH MORE RARE ROCK SPECIMENS TO ADD TO MY COLLECTION!

AND WON'T THAT BE THRILLING! BAH!

PRESENTLY...

BUT WHAT I CAN'T UNDERSTAND, KID, IS WHY THE HAND SHOULD HAVE WARNED US THAT HIS MINION, THE NEEDLE, IS ABOUT TO PULL SOME CROOKED HI-JINKS, IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF THE PANAMA CANAL!

LET'S JUST BE GLAD THAT HE DID WARN US!

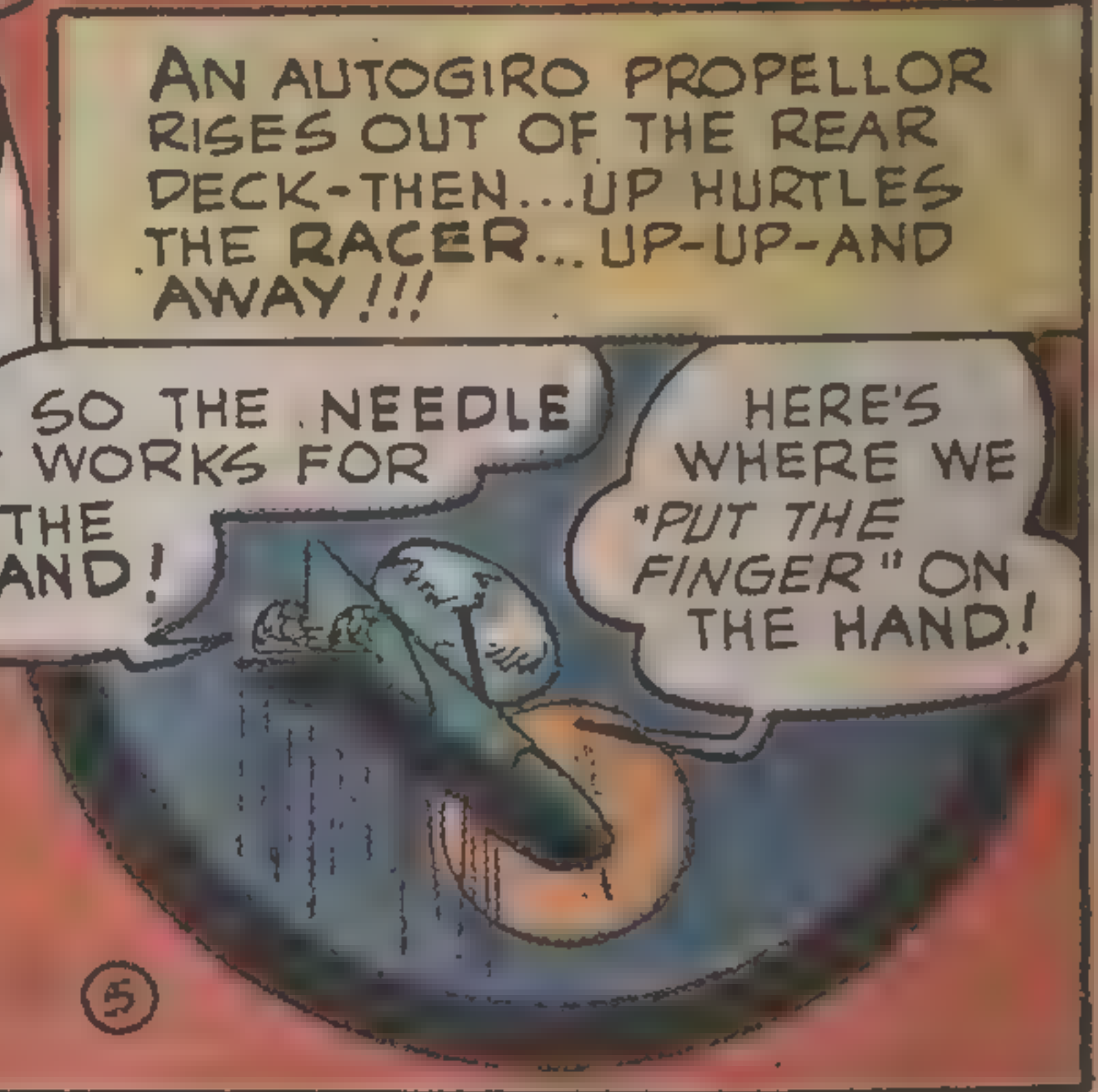
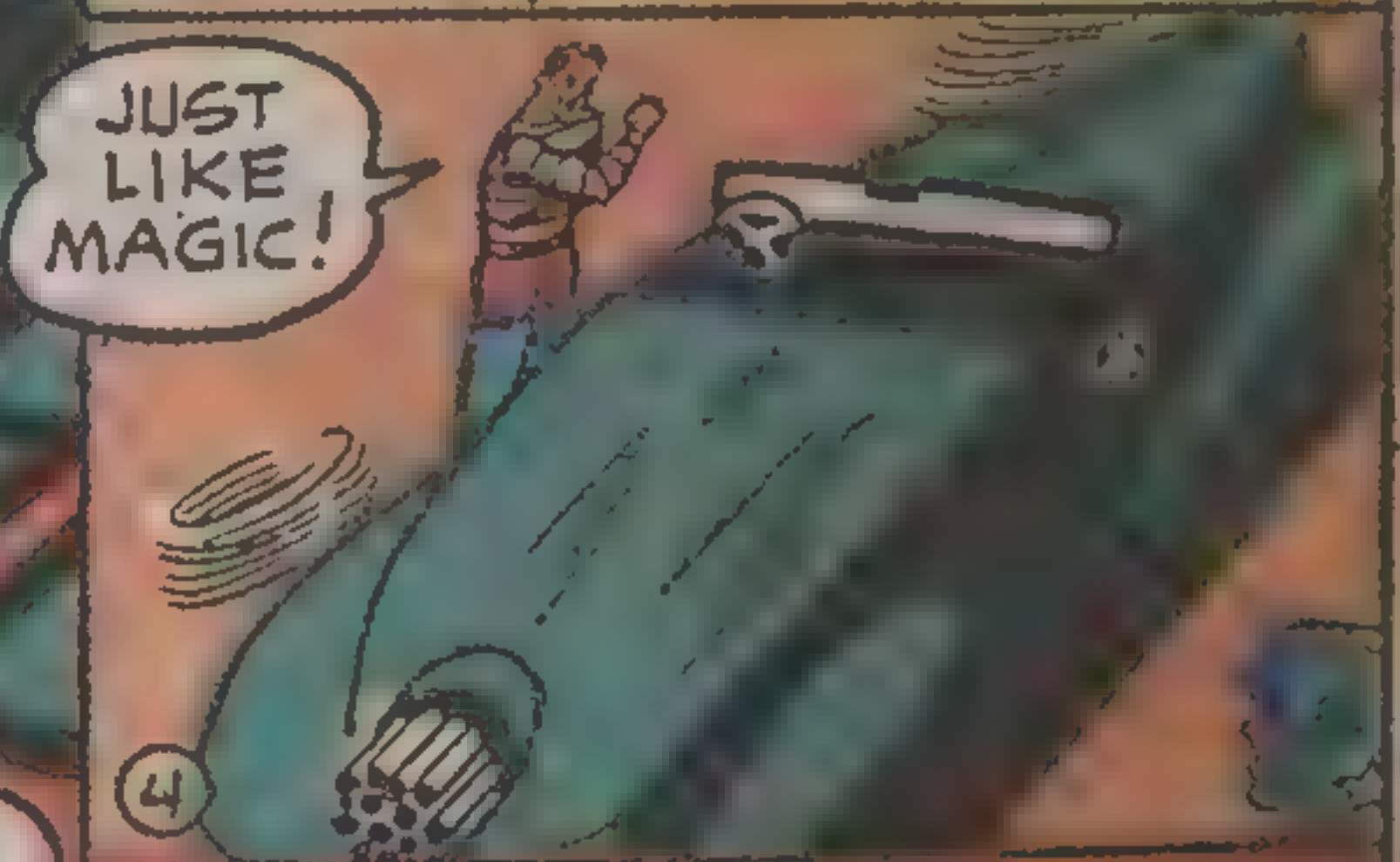
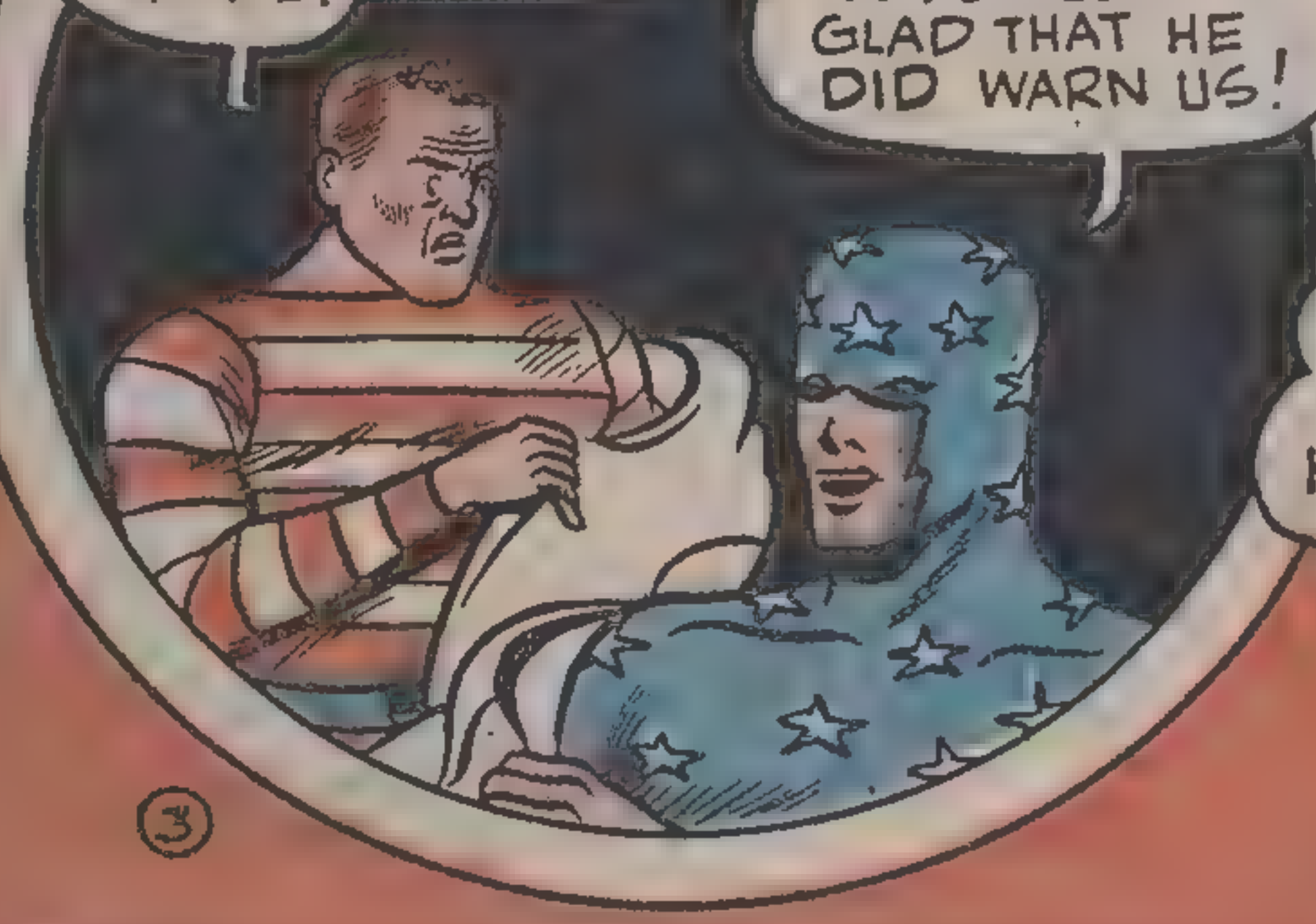
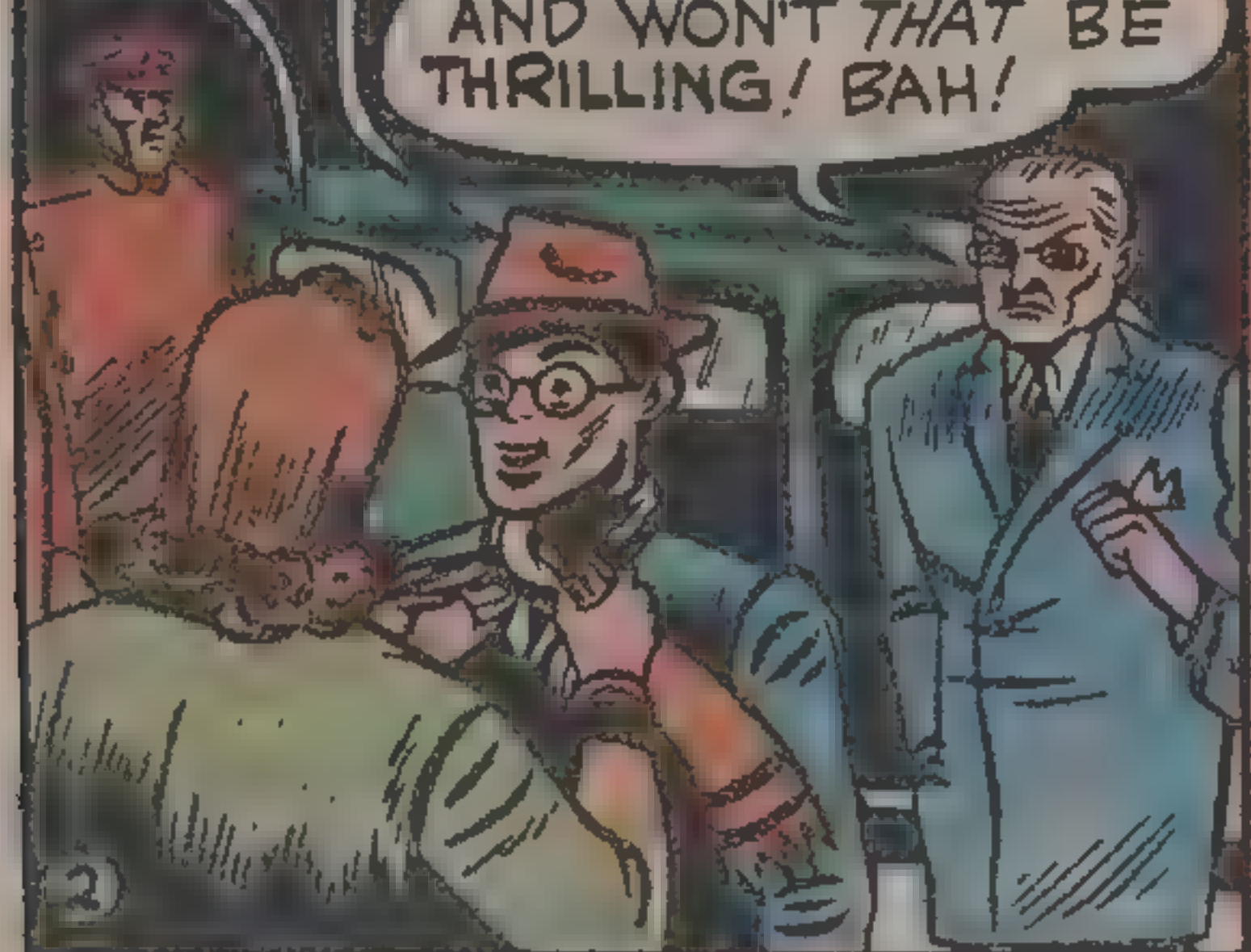
AS STRIPESY PASSES A CONCEALED BUTTON ON THE DASHBOARD, SECTIONS OF THE AUTO'S FRAMEWORK SPIN AND WHIRL UNTIL THE STAIT LIMOUSINE BECOMES THE STREAMLINED STAR-ROCKET RACER!!

JUST LIKE MAGIC!

AN AUTOGIRO PROPELLOR RISES OUT OF THE REAR DECK--THEN...UP HURTLES THE RACER...UP-UP-AND AWAY!!!

SO THE NEEDLE WORKS FOR THE HAND!

HERE'S WHERE WE "PUT THE FINGER" ON THE HAND!



STRAIGHT UP INTO THE SUB-STRATOSPHERE RISES THE STRANGE CRAFT. THEN---

THE AUTOGIRO ATTACHMENT IS TOO SLOW FOR A LONG TRIP, SO...

SO I PRESS ANOTHER BUTTON, AND....

THE AUTOGIRO BLADES ARE RETRACTED, WINGS SPROUT, A BATTERY OF ROCKET-TUBES ROAR INTO LIFE, AND...

THE RACER BECOMES A ROCKET-SHIP!

AN' BOY-- CAN SHE TRAVEL!!!

ON THROUGH THE DARK OF NIGHT THE FLEET SHIP TRAVELS, DOWN THE EASTERN SEABOARD, AND OUT OVER THE CARIBBEAN SEA AS THE TROPICAL DAY DAWNS WITH STARTLING SWIFTNES.

DOWN THERE! THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA!

THAT'S NOT ALL I SEE. SOMEONE SEEMS TO BE IN DISTRESS!

THE TELESCOPE REVEALS A BOUND, HELP-LESS FIGURE ABOARD A DRIFTING VESSEL!

PONTOONS SWING INTO POSITION. THE STAR-ROCKET RACER ALIGHTS ON THE OCEAN NEAR THE DRIFTING VESSEL....

CAREFUL, KID!

THAT MAN NEEDS OUR HELP!

BUT AS THE STAR-SPANGLED KID APPROACHES THE "HELPLESS" FIGURE, IT SUDDENLY WHIRLS ERECT...THE MUZZLE OF A DEADLY NEEDLE-GUN STARES MOCKINGLY INTO THE KID'S FACE...!

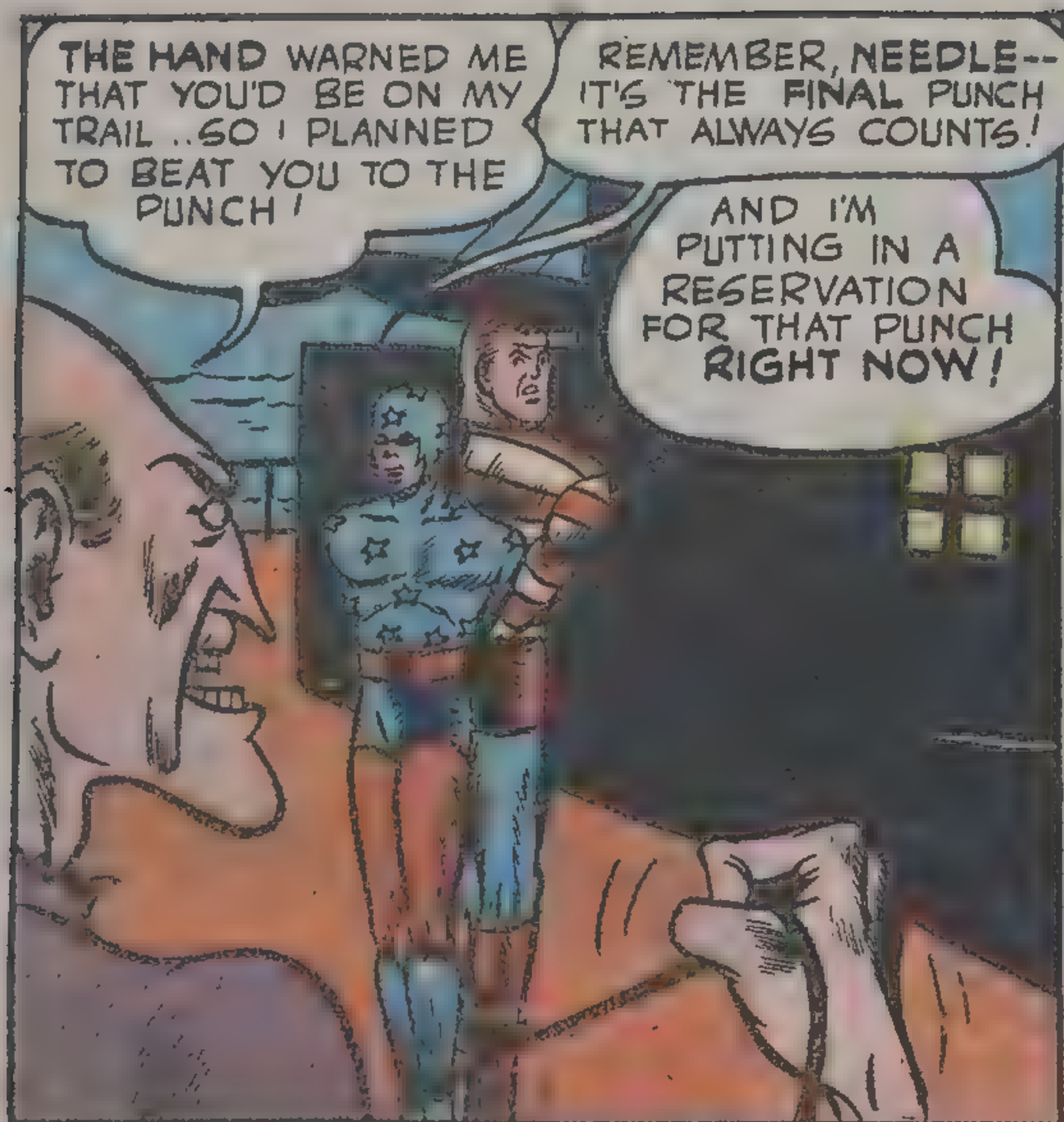
THE NEEDLE!

NONE OTHER! IF I SAY SO MYSELF, I CERTAINLY TRAPPED YOU NEATLY!

JOIN US-- OR YOUR JUVENILE FRIEND PERISHES!

NOTHIN' ELSE I CAN DO!

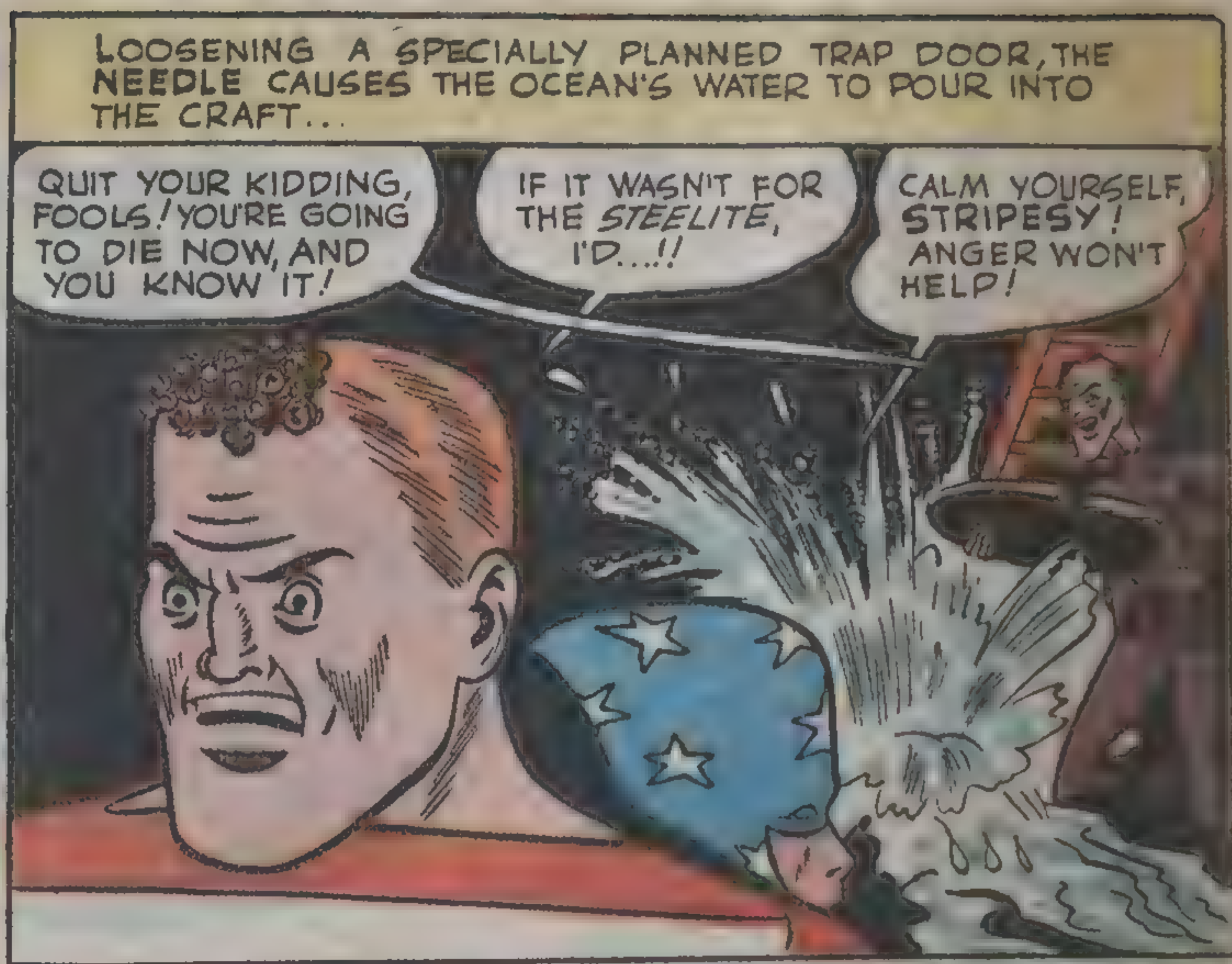
HO! HO! HO! AND NOW, TO MAKE THIS LITTLE PICTURE COMPLETE, I'LL TIE UP BOTH OF YOU WITH YOUR OWN STEELITE!



THE HAND WARNED ME THAT YOU'D BE ON MY TRAIL...SO I PLANNED TO BEAT YOU TO THE PUNCH!

REMEMBER, NEEDLE-- IT'S THE FINAL PUNCH THAT ALWAYS COUNTS!

AND I'M PUTTING IN A RESERVATION FOR THAT PUNCH RIGHT NOW!



LOOSENING A SPECIALLY PLANNED TRAP DOOR, THE NEEDLE CAUSES THE OCEAN'S WATER TO POUR INTO THE CRAFT...

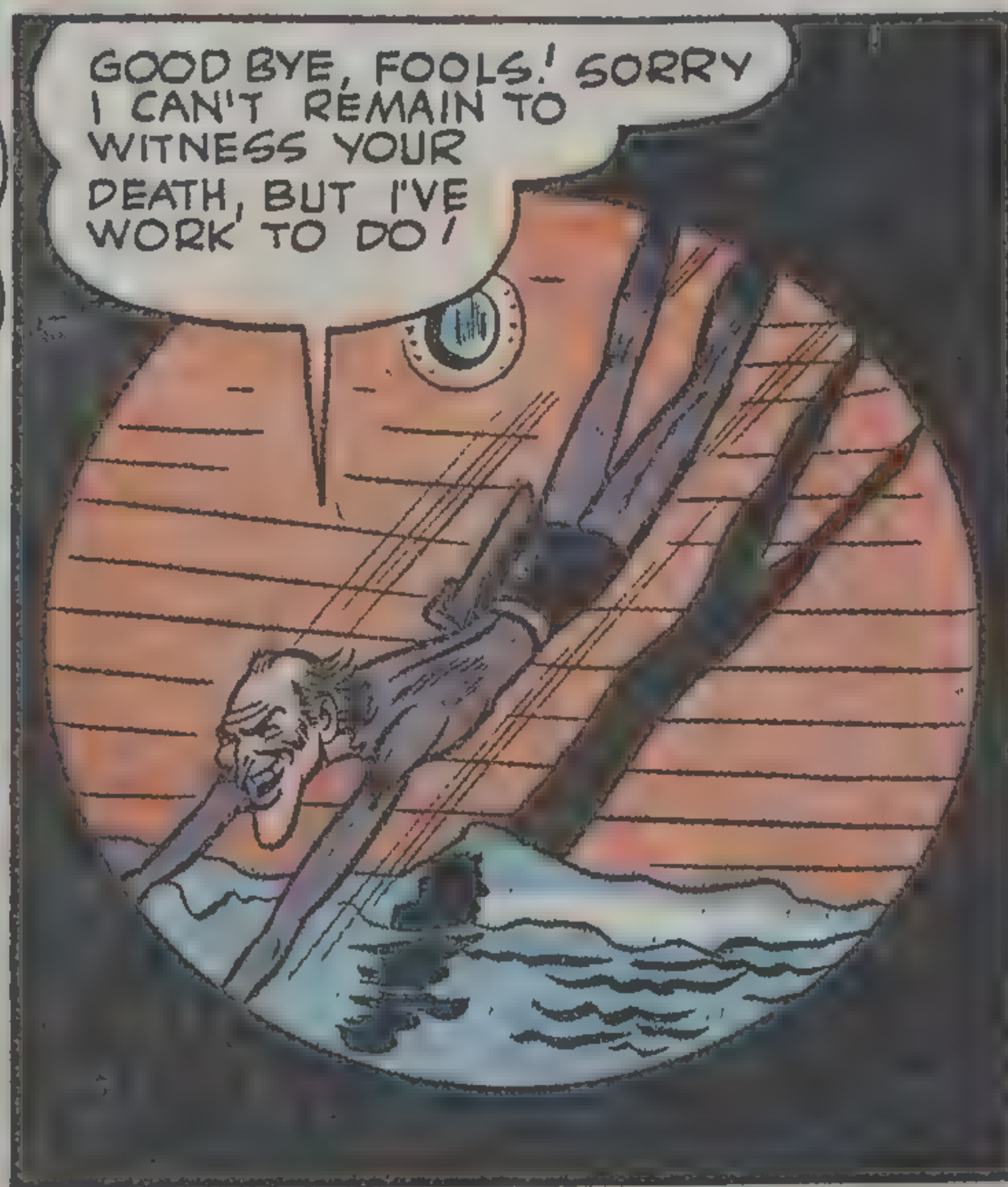
QUIT YOUR KIDDING, FOOLS! YOU'RE GOING TO DIE NOW, AND YOU KNOW IT!

IF IT WASN'T FOR THE STEELITE, I'D...!!

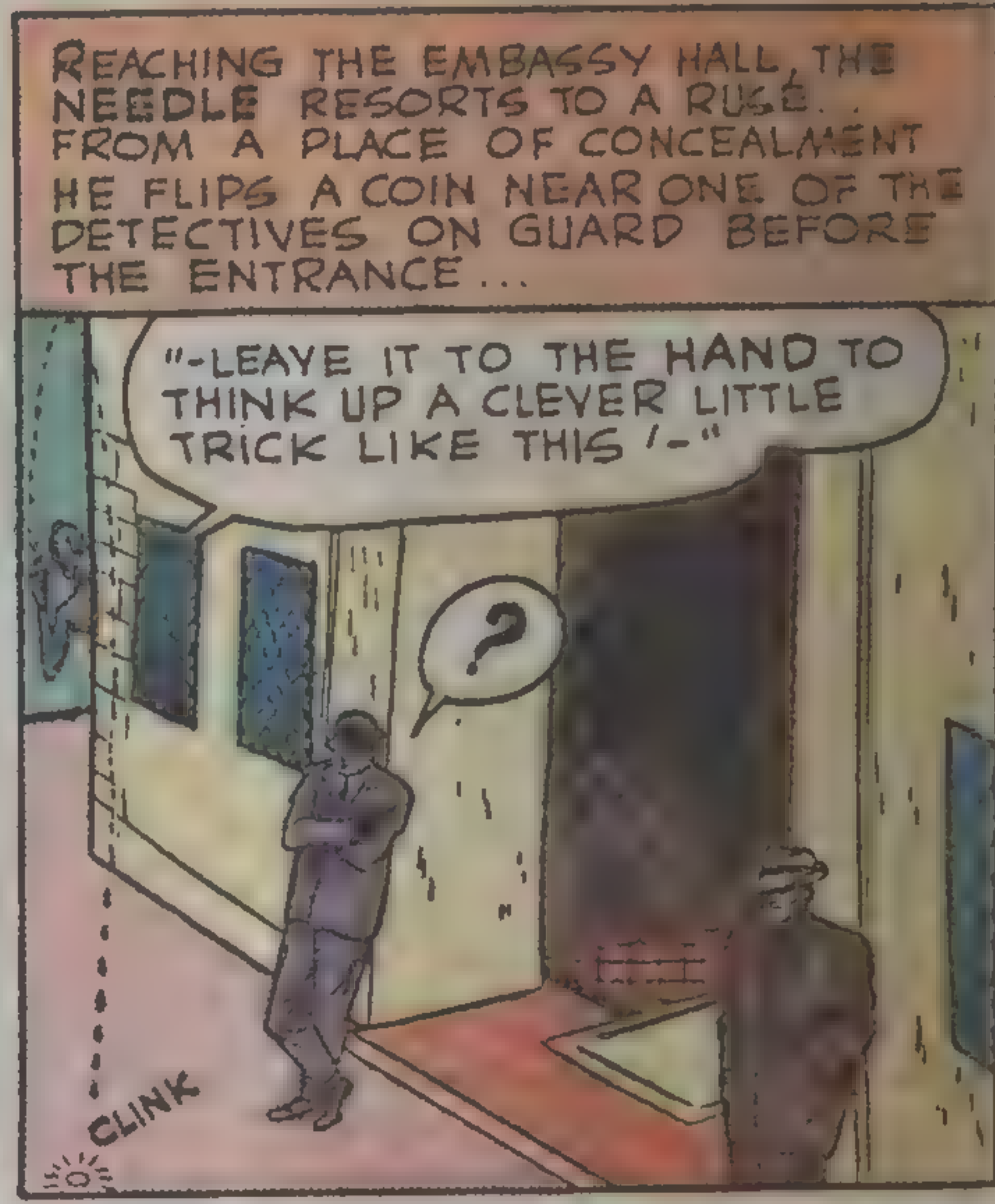
CALM YOURSELF, STRIPESY! ANGER WON'T HELP!



HM-MM! ACCORDING TO THE HAND'S BLUEPRINTED INSTRUCTIONS, I'M TO DROP IN ON CLAUDE BRIGHTON AT EMBASSY HALL THIS EVENING..

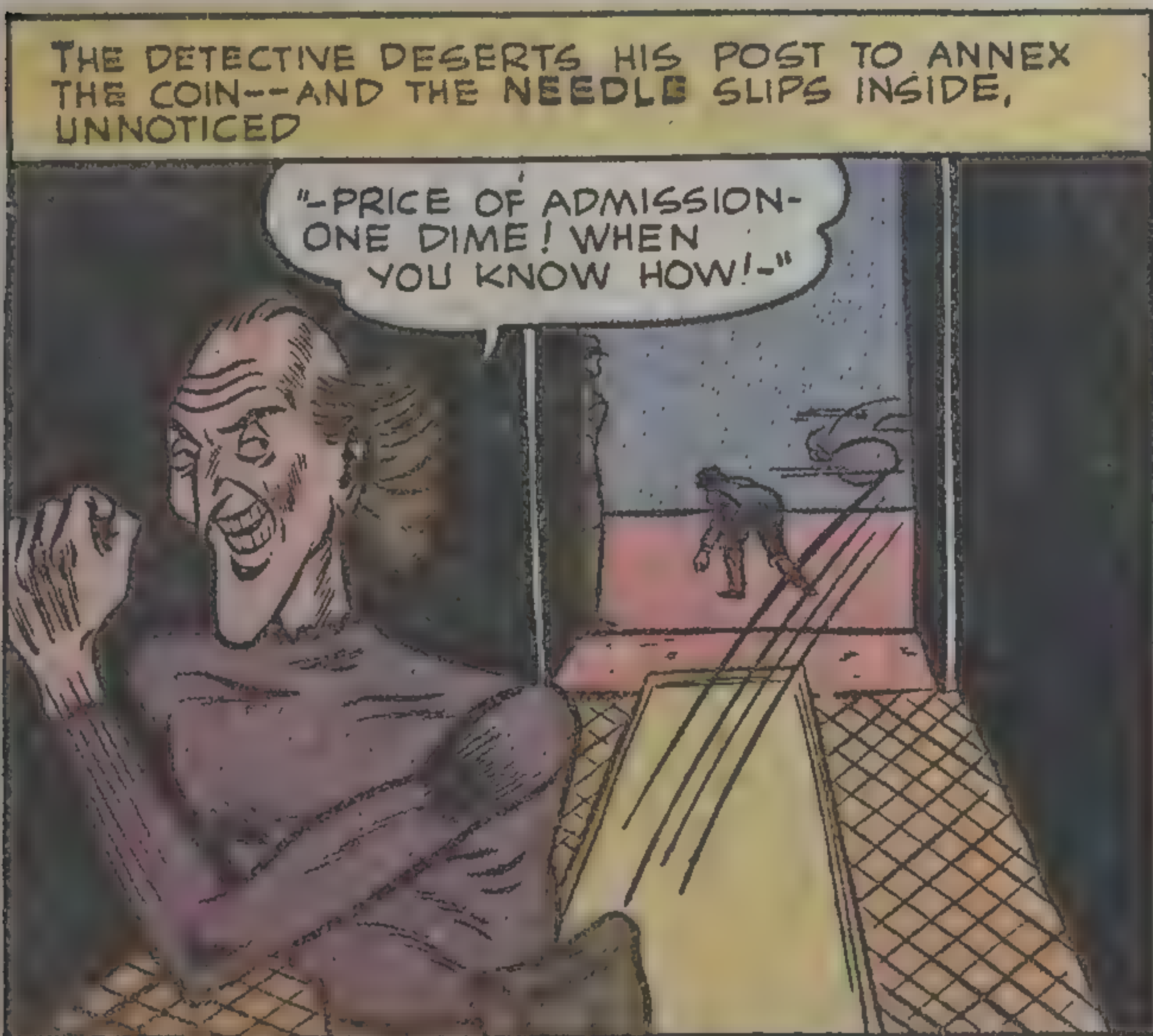


GOOD BYE, FOOLS! SORRY I CAN'T REMAIN TO WITNESS YOUR DEATH, BUT I'VE WORK TO DO!



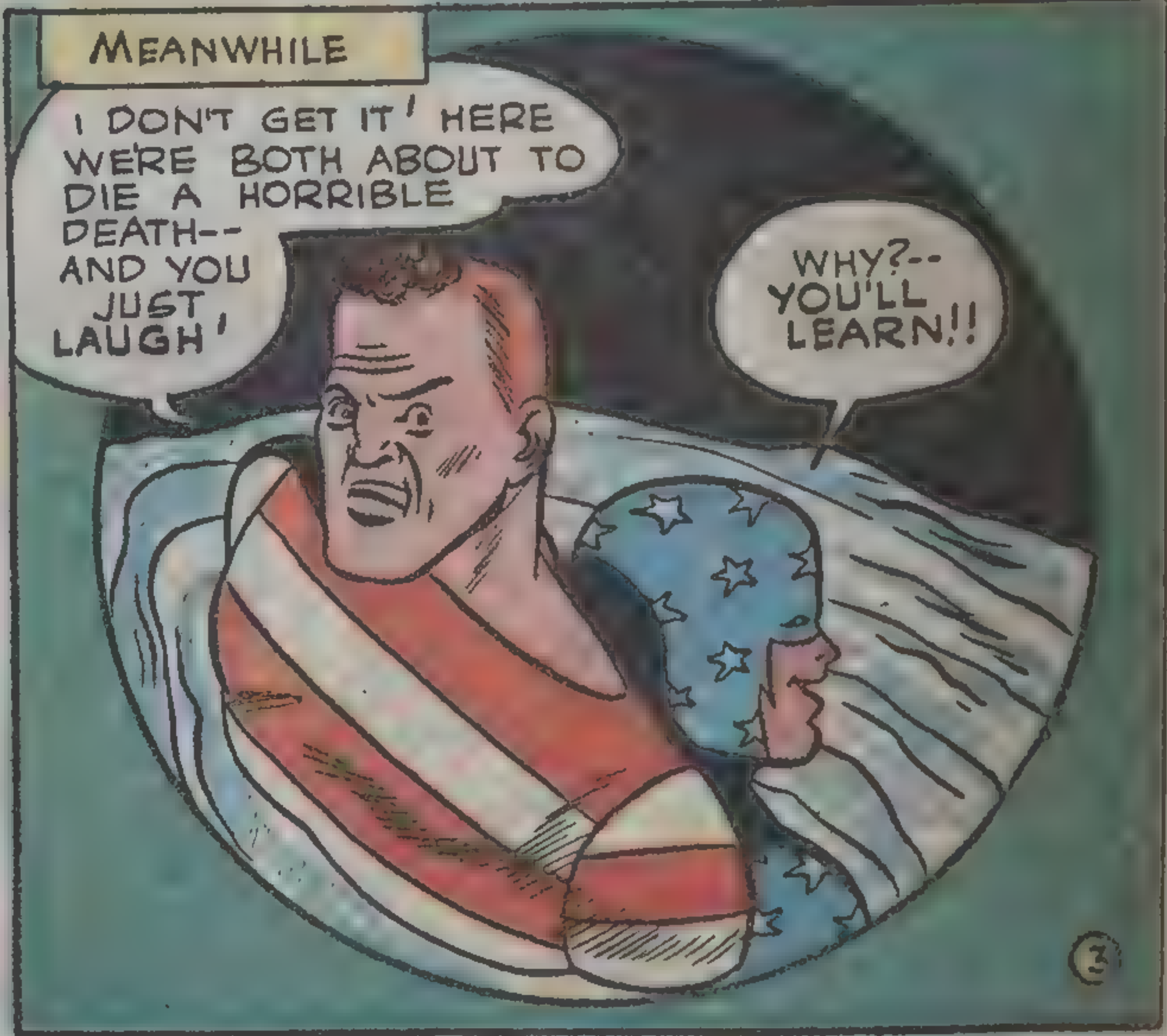
REACHING THE EMBASSY HALL, THE NEEDLE RESORTS TO A RUGE. FROM A PLACE OF CONCEALMENT HE FLIPS A COIN NEAR ONE OF THE DETECTIVES ON GUARD BEFORE THE ENTRANCE...

"-LEAVE IT TO THE HAND TO THINK UP A CLEVER LITTLE TRICK LIKE THIS!-"



THE DETECTIVE DESERTS HIS POST TO ANNEX THE COIN--AND THE NEEDLE SLIPS INSIDE, UNNOTICED

"-PRICE OF ADMISSION-- ONE DIME! WHEN YOU KNOW HOW!-"



MEANWHILE

I DON'T GET IT! HERE WE'RE BOTH ABOUT TO DIE A HORRIBLE DEATH-- AND YOU JUST LAUGH!

WHY?-- YOU'LL LEARN!!

FORESIGHT, STRIPESY! YOU SEE, WHEN THE NEEDLE TIED ME, I HAD THE PRESENCE OF MIND TO FLEX MY MUSCLES. SINCE HE DEPARTED, I'VE BEEN STRAINING AT MY BONDS AND NOW LOOK-- ONE HAND IS FREE!

GOOD WORK, KID! BUT HURRY!!

WORKING SWIFTLY, DESPERATELY, THE KID RELEASES STRIPESY'S HANDS FROM BEHIND HIS BACK...

THERE YOU ARE!

SWELL! NOW TO GET THE STEELITE OFF MY FEET THEN I'LL HELP YOU FINISH UNTYING YOURSELF!

BUT AS STRIPESY UNTIES THE BONDS THAT SHACKLE HIS FEET, THE BOAT UNEXPECTEDLY CAPSIZES ...!

KID! KID!!

SWIMMING DESPERATELY UNDERWATER, STRIPESY SUCCEEDS IN SEIZING HIS FRIEND, THEN STRIKES OUT FOR THE WATER'S SURFACE ...

"-QUICK!-- BEFORE HE DROWNS!--"

LATER--ABOARD THE RACER... STRIPESY FREES THE STAR-SPANGLED KID OF THE LAST OF HIS BONDS...

WHEW! FOR A SECOND, KID, I THOUGHT YOU WAS A GONER!

I'M PERFECTLY OKAY NOW AND WE'D BETTER LOSE NO TIME IN GETTING TO EMBASSY HALL IF WE'RE TO AID BRIGHTON, THE FAMOUS INVENTOR!

MEANWHILE--CLAUDE BRIGHTON DISCOVERS A MYSTERIOUS NOTE IN ONE OF THE SANDWICHES SERVED HIM.

"-WHAT'S THIS?-"

COME TO THE FLOWER POT IN THE ROOM'S EAST CORNER--ALONE--IF YOU WISH TO LEARN OF A PLOT TO STEAL YOUR NEW RAY-GUN WEAPON...

AS THE SCIENTIST OBEYS THE NOTE'S INSTRUCTIONS...

THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM IS TO GET OUT OF HERE WITH BRIGHTON, UNOBSERVED... THAT'S SOMETHING THE HAND LEFT FOR ME TO FIGURE OUT!

MEANWHILE--STRIPESEY AND THE KID HAVE ARRIVED ON THE SCENE..

BUT STRIPESY AND I HAVE TO GET IN THERE AND WARN CLAUDE BRIGHTON!

THE NEEDLE IS OUT TO GET HIM!

IT'S THE STAR-SPANGLED KID AND STRIPESY!

MAYBE THEY KNOW WHAT THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT--AND MAYBE THEY DON'T! I'LL QUESTION THEM ALONE

THE SHARP-FACED DETECTIVE LEADS THEM INTO ONE OF THE HALL'S ROOMS

NOW LET ME HEAR YOUR YARN AGAIN

THERE ISN'T TIME FOR ALL THIS RED TAPE!

RESTRAIN YOURSELF, STRIPESY! I'M SURE THIS MAN WILL COOPERATE ONCE HE KNOWS THE WHOLE STORY.

AND THOSE ARE ALL THE DETAILS. WILL YOU HELP US?

WELL, NOW, I DON'T KNOW. I'LL HAVE TO THINK IT OVER.

I'M SICK O' THIS STALLIN'! I'M GOIN' IN TO WARN BRIGHTON WHETHER THIS THICK-SKULLED COP WANTS US TO OR NOT.

NO YOU'RE NOT! YOU'RE STAYING RIGHT HERE!

OH, WHAT A FOOL I'VE BEEN! OF COURSE! THIS MAN IS A HIRELING OF THE HAND!

NO FOOLIN'!

RIGHT, MY FRIENDS! I WAS PLANTED HERE IN ORDER TO MAKE THINGS TOUGH FOR YOU SHOULD YOU SHOW UP TO ANNOY THE NEEDLE. MAKE YOURSELVES COMFORTABLE. YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE A LONG WAIT WHILE THE NEEDLE HAS PLENTY OF TIME TO GET AWAY WITH BRIGHTON!

AT THAT VERY MOMENT, LEAPING THRU A HIGH WINDOW, HIS UNCONSCIOUS CAPTIVE SLUNG OVER HIS SHOULDER, THE NEEDLE HURTLES OVER THE UNSUSPECTING GUARDS' HEADS TO THE LIMB OF A NEARBY TREE

LATER--AS BRIGHTON REVIVES IN HIS OWN CAR

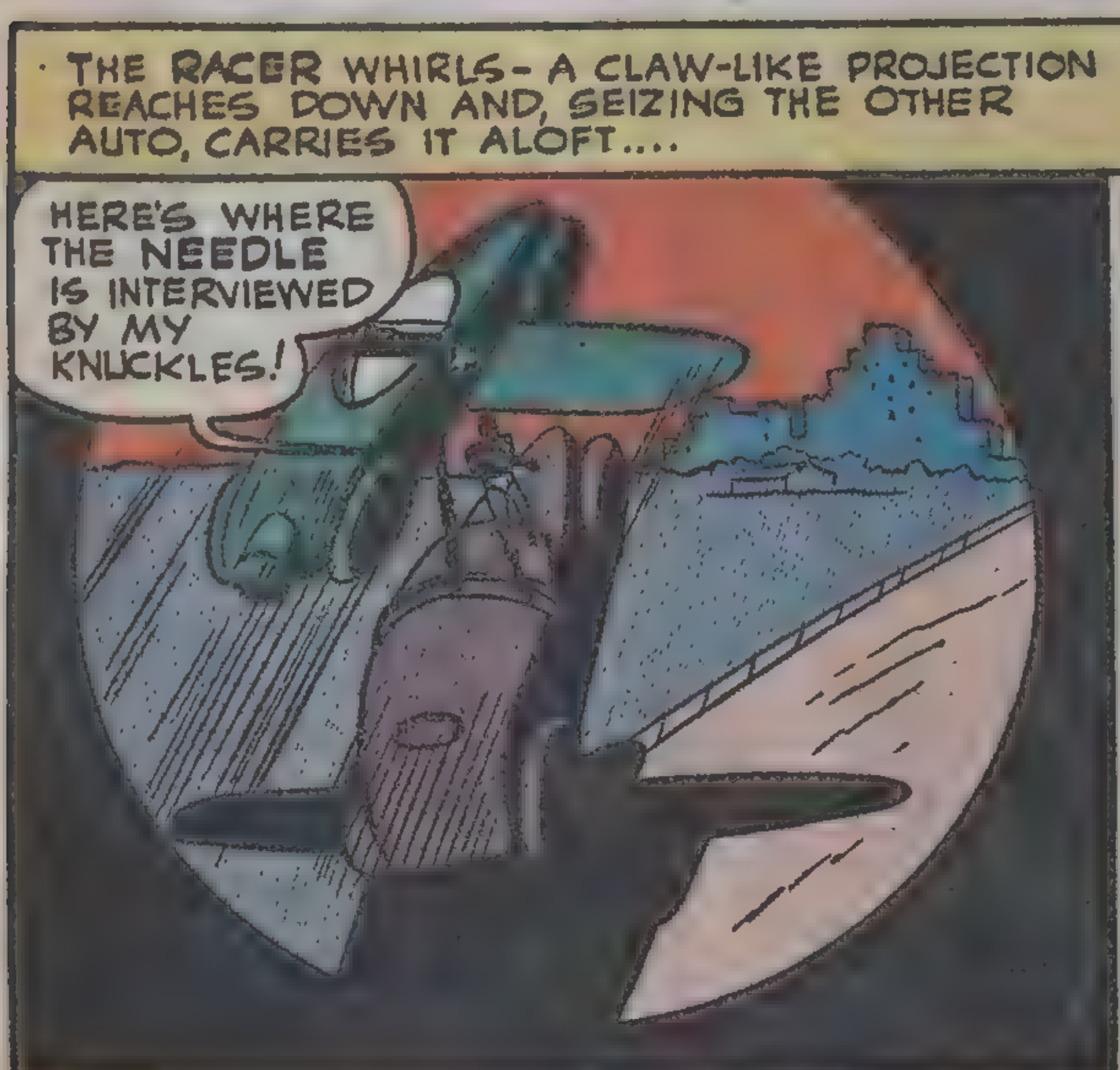
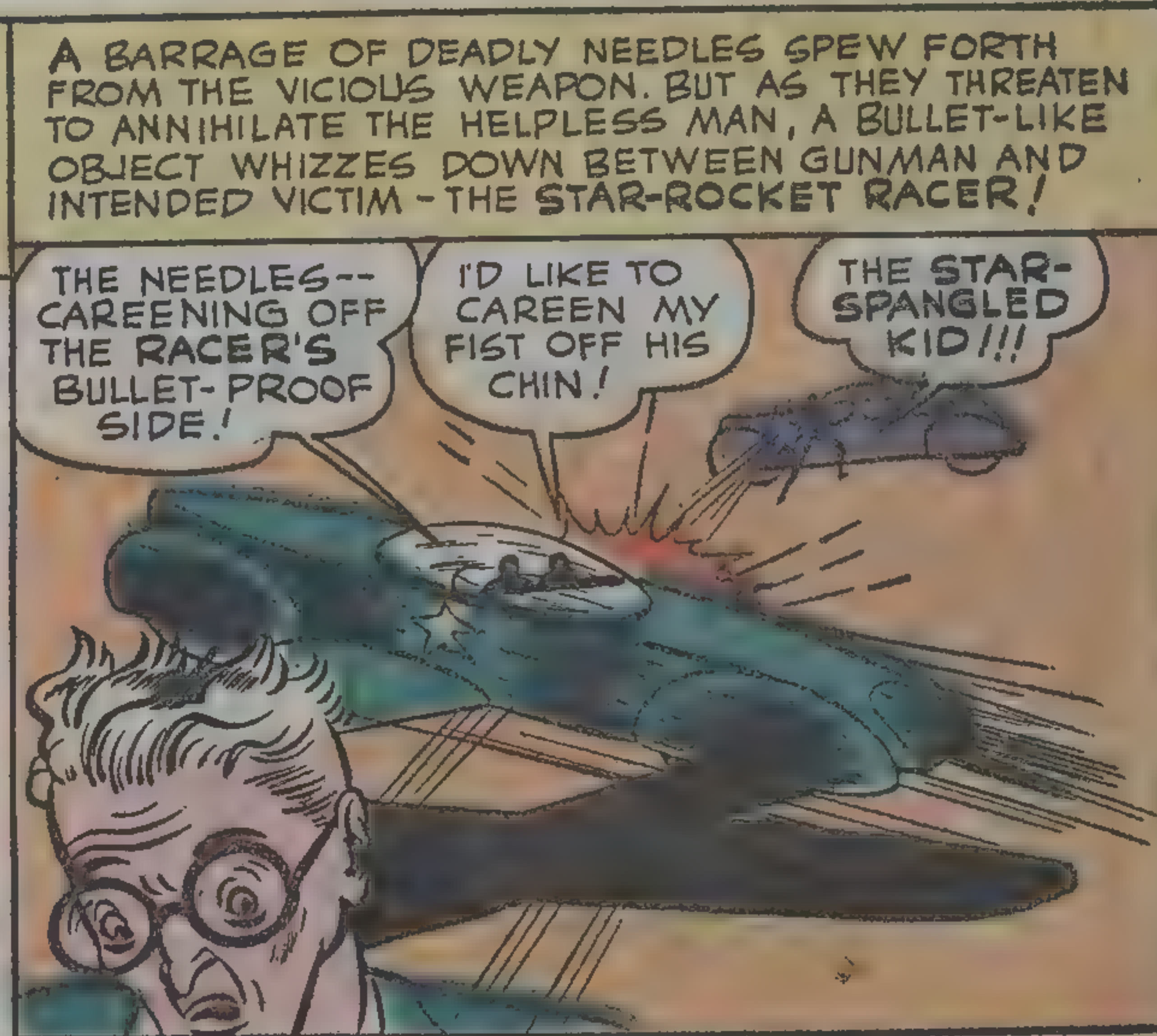
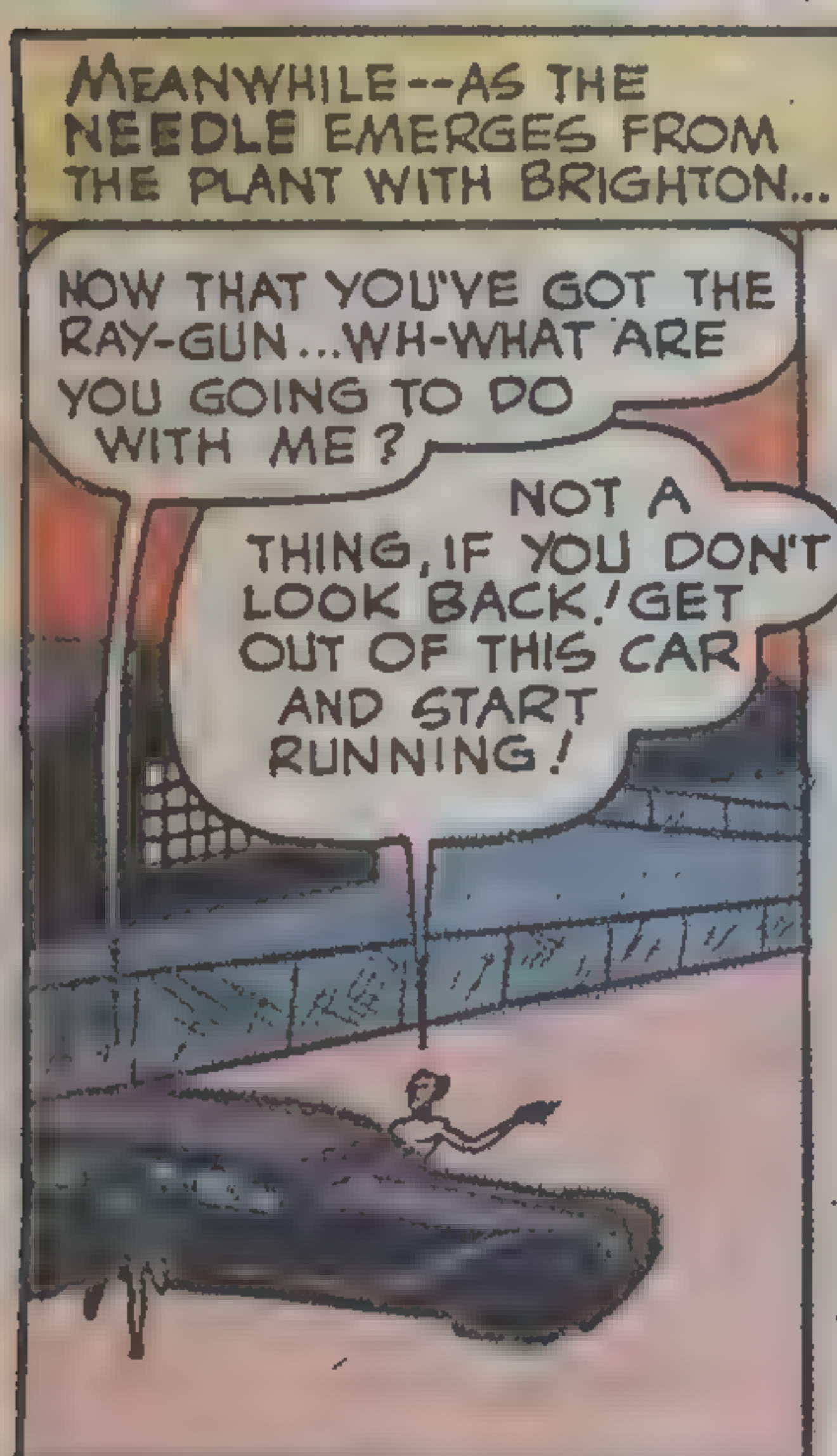
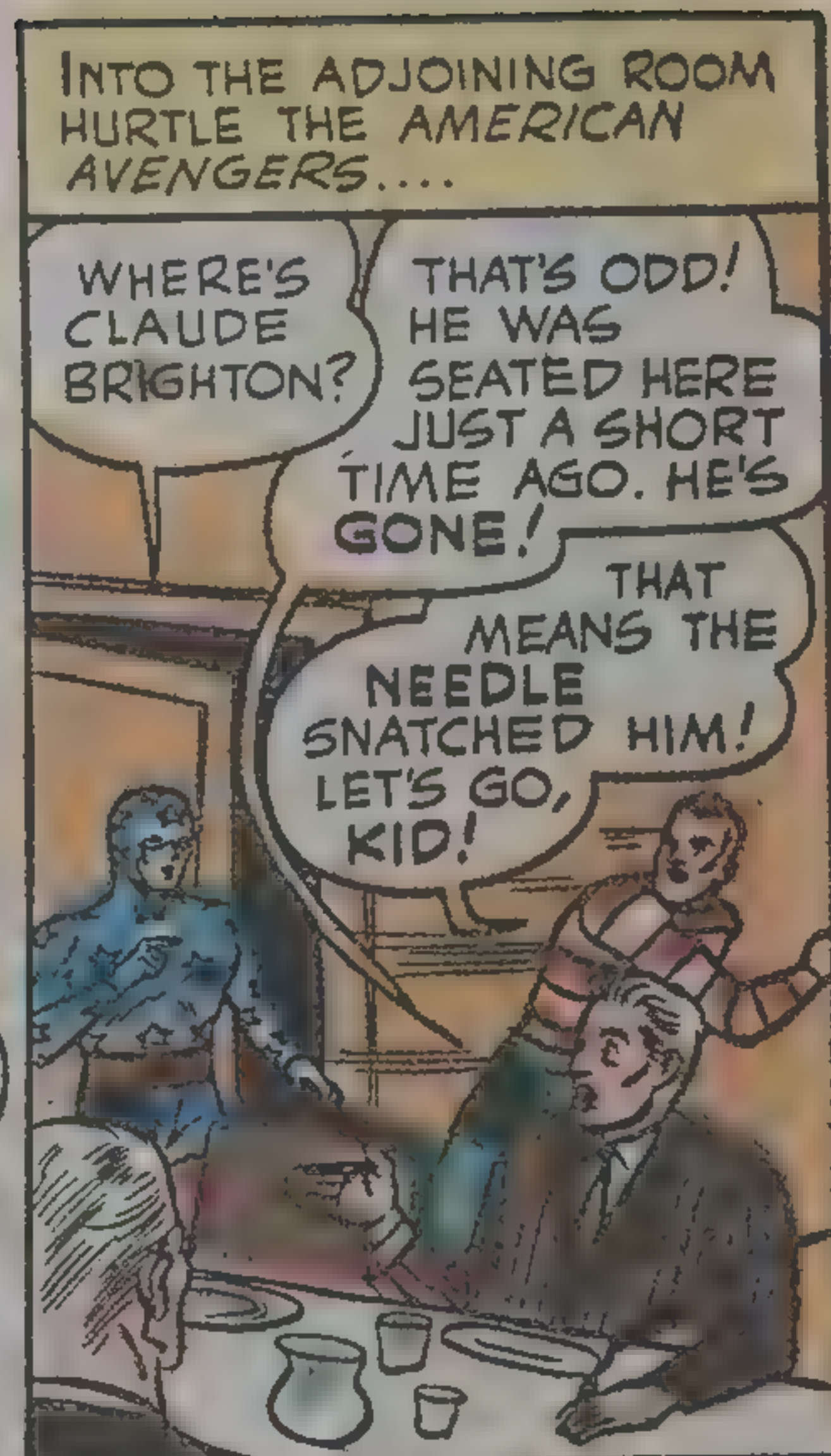
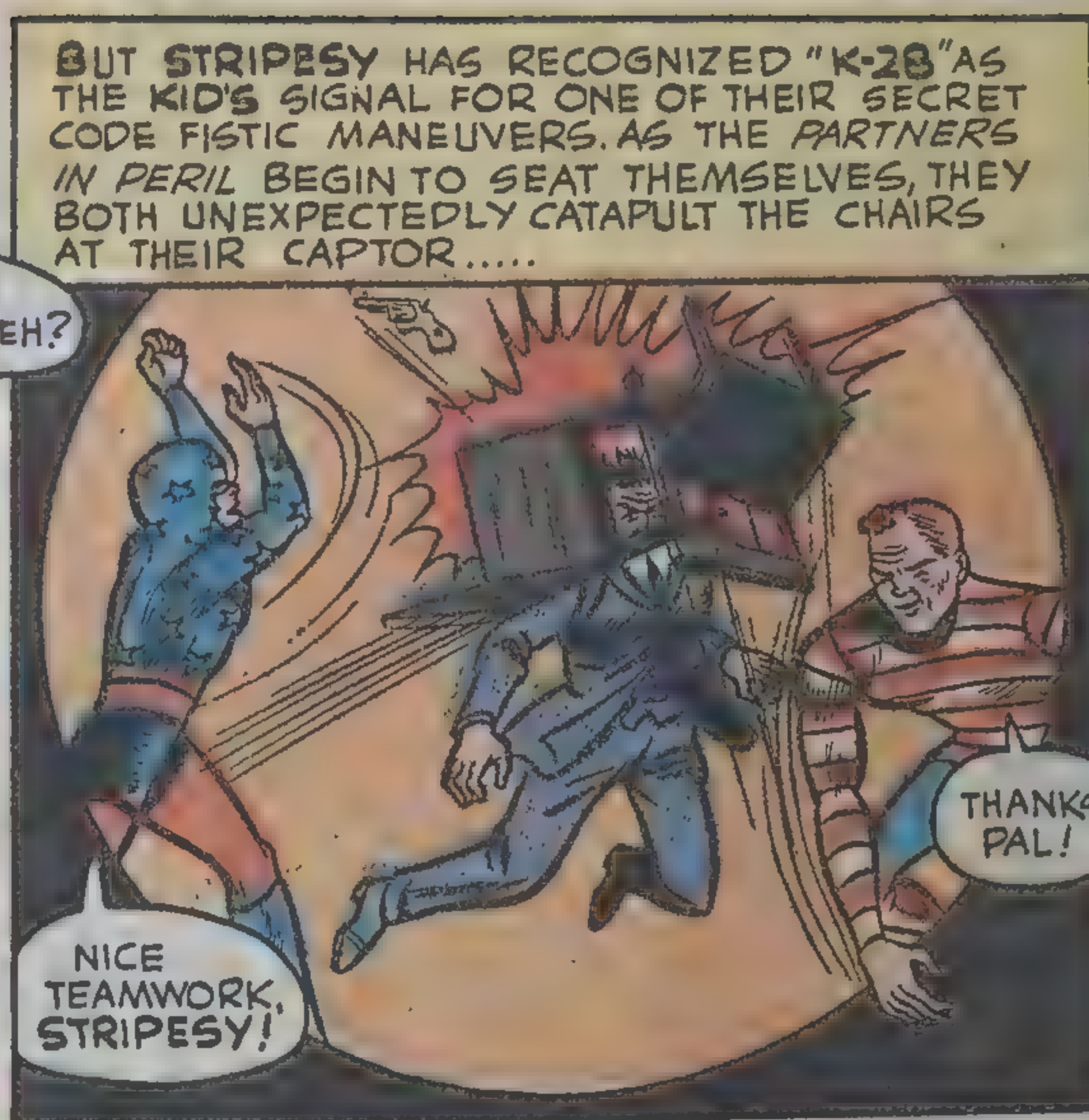
YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE OVER THE WHEEL NOW...WE'LL DRIVE INTO YOUR LABORATORIES PLANT...AND IF YOU SIGNAL THE WATCHMAN--YOU DIE! GET ME??

G-GET Y-Y-YOU!!

LATER--INSIDE BRIGHTON'S PRIVATE OFFICE AT THE BRIGHTON EXPERIMENTAL LABORATORIES ...

THE RAY-GUN--MINE!

IT CAN BE A TERRIBLE FORCE FOR EVIL IN THE WRONG HANDS!



WHY, IT'S THE BLUEPRINT FOR BANDITRY SUPPLIED TO THE NEEDLE BY THE HAND! OUR LONG-LEGGED FRIEND MUST HAVE BEEN SO ANXIOUS TO PART FROM OUR COMPANY THAT HE DROPPED IT IN HIS RUSH TO GET AWAY!



THE KID REJOINS STRIPESY...

MY GOSH! IT SAYS HERE THAT HE'S TO DESTROY THE PANAMA CANAL LOCKS FROM ATOP THE UNCOMPLETED BANDOW BUILDING NEAR THE CANAL WITH THE STOLEN RAY-GUN! LATER, HE'S TO SELL THE RAY-GUN TO A FOREIGN POWER!



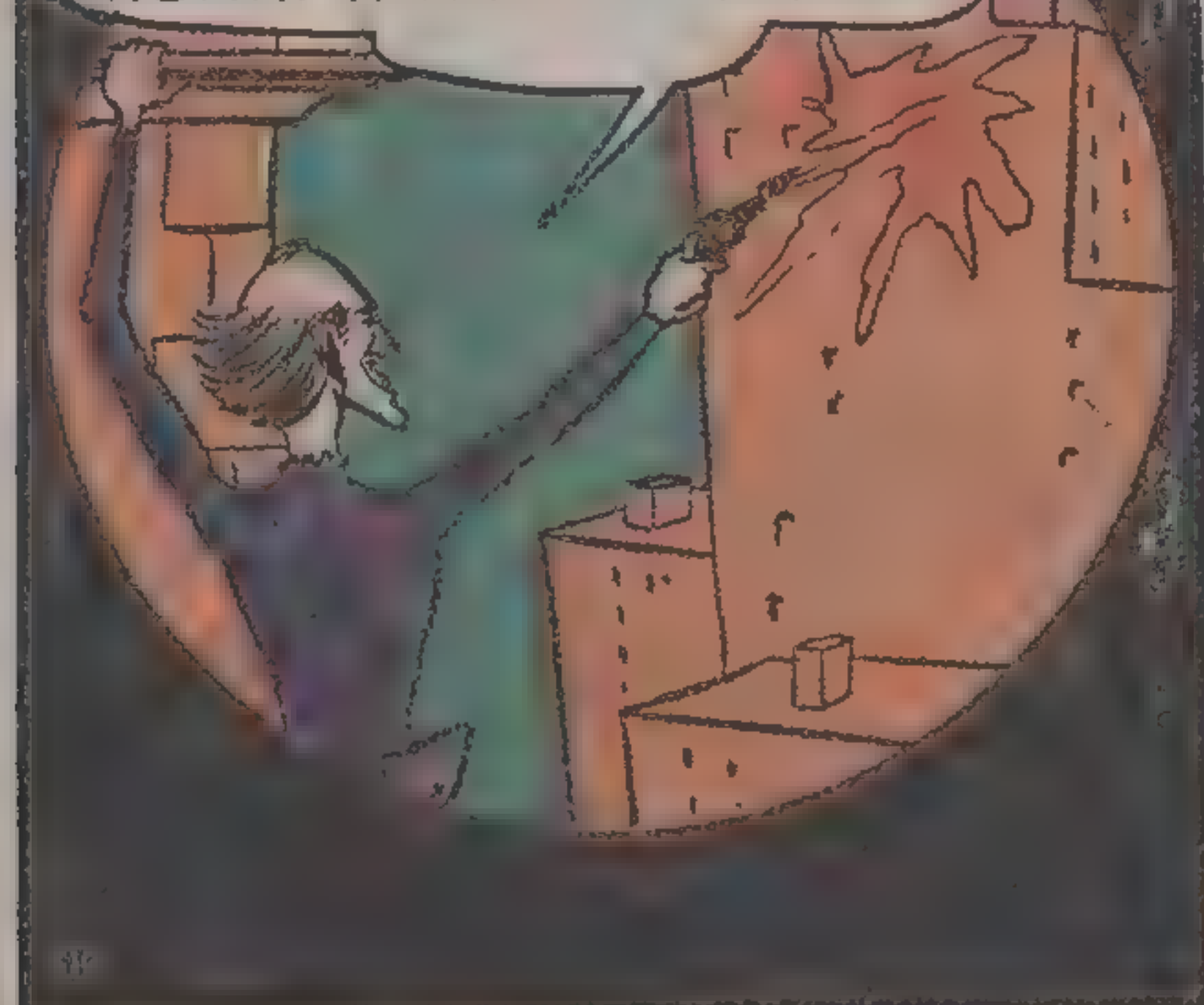
WHAT ARE WE WAITIN' FOR? LET'S GO!!

THRU THE SKY ZOOMS THE STREAKING STAR ROCKET RACER IN A TENSE RACE AGAINST TIME...

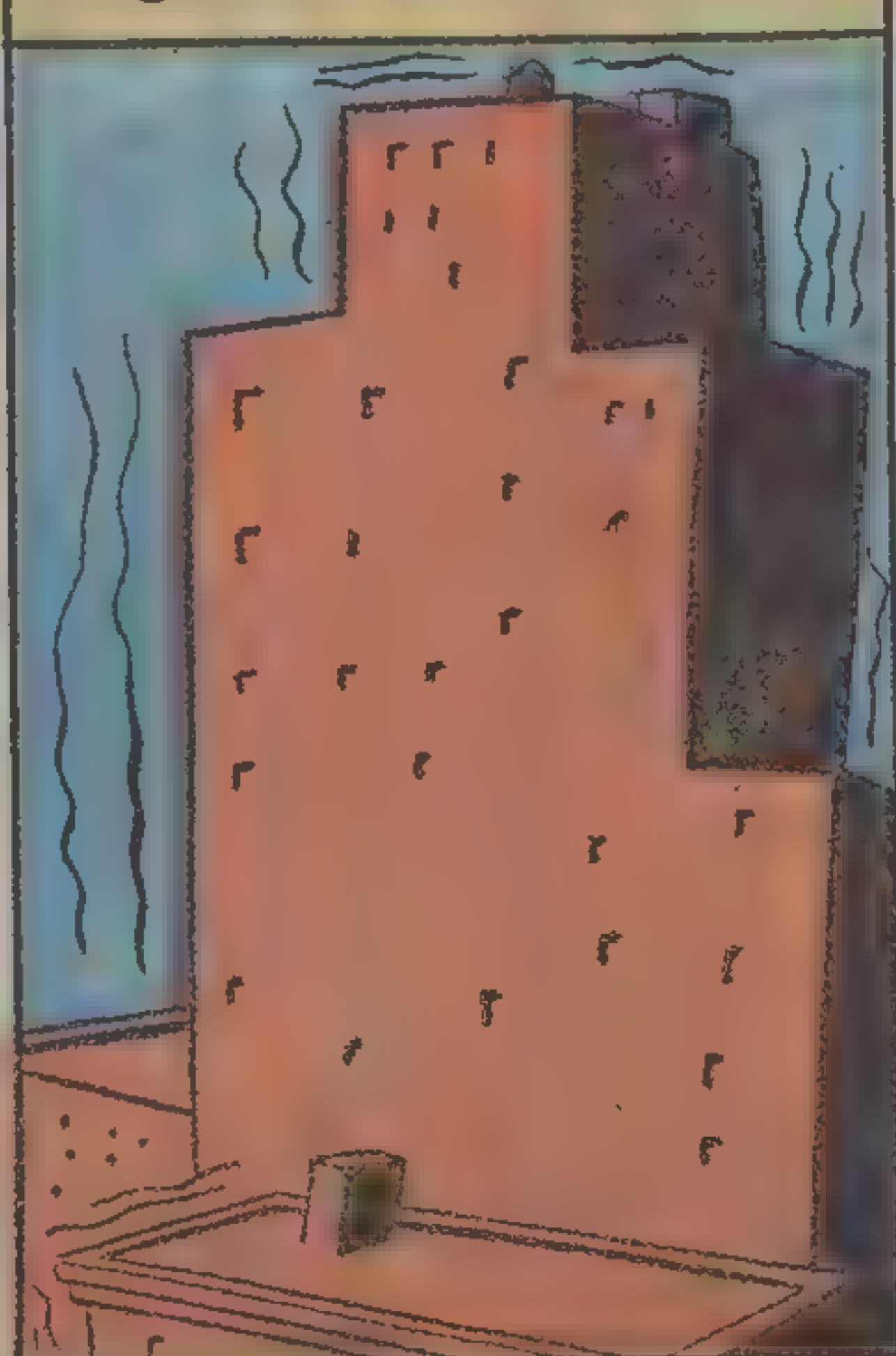


BUT MEANWHILE--SCALING THE BANDOW BUILDING, THE NEEDLE BLASTS A RAY-GUN DISCHARGE TOWARD NEARBY BUILDINGS...

THIS DEMONSTRATION ALONE SHOULD CONVINCE FOREIGN BIDDERS THAT THE SECRET OF THE RAY-GUN IS WORTH FANTASTIC SUMS!



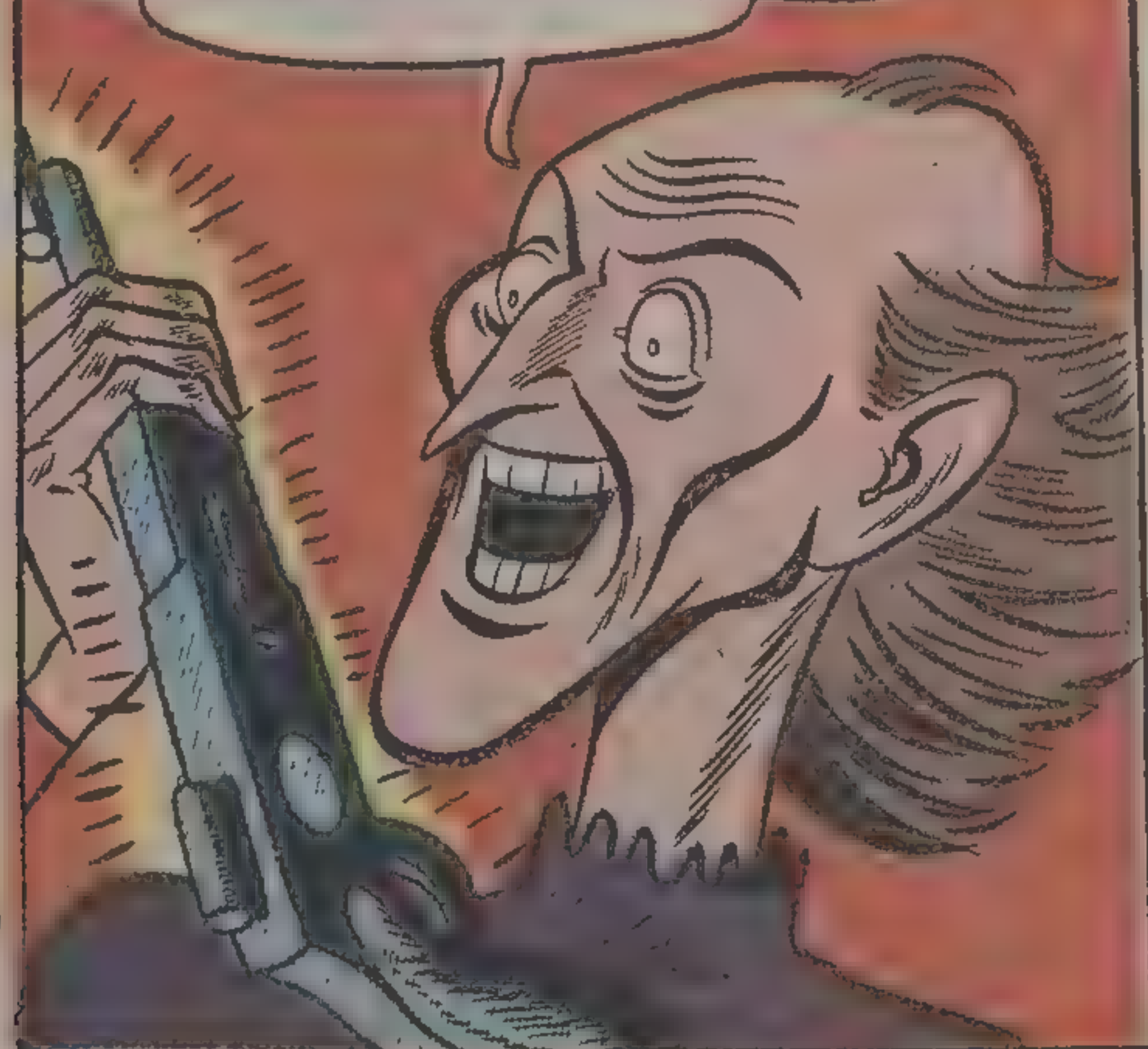
...IN RESPONSE, THE MIGHTY STRUCTURES VIBRATE VIOLENTLY...



...THEN CRASH TO EARTH IN CRUMBLING RUINS...

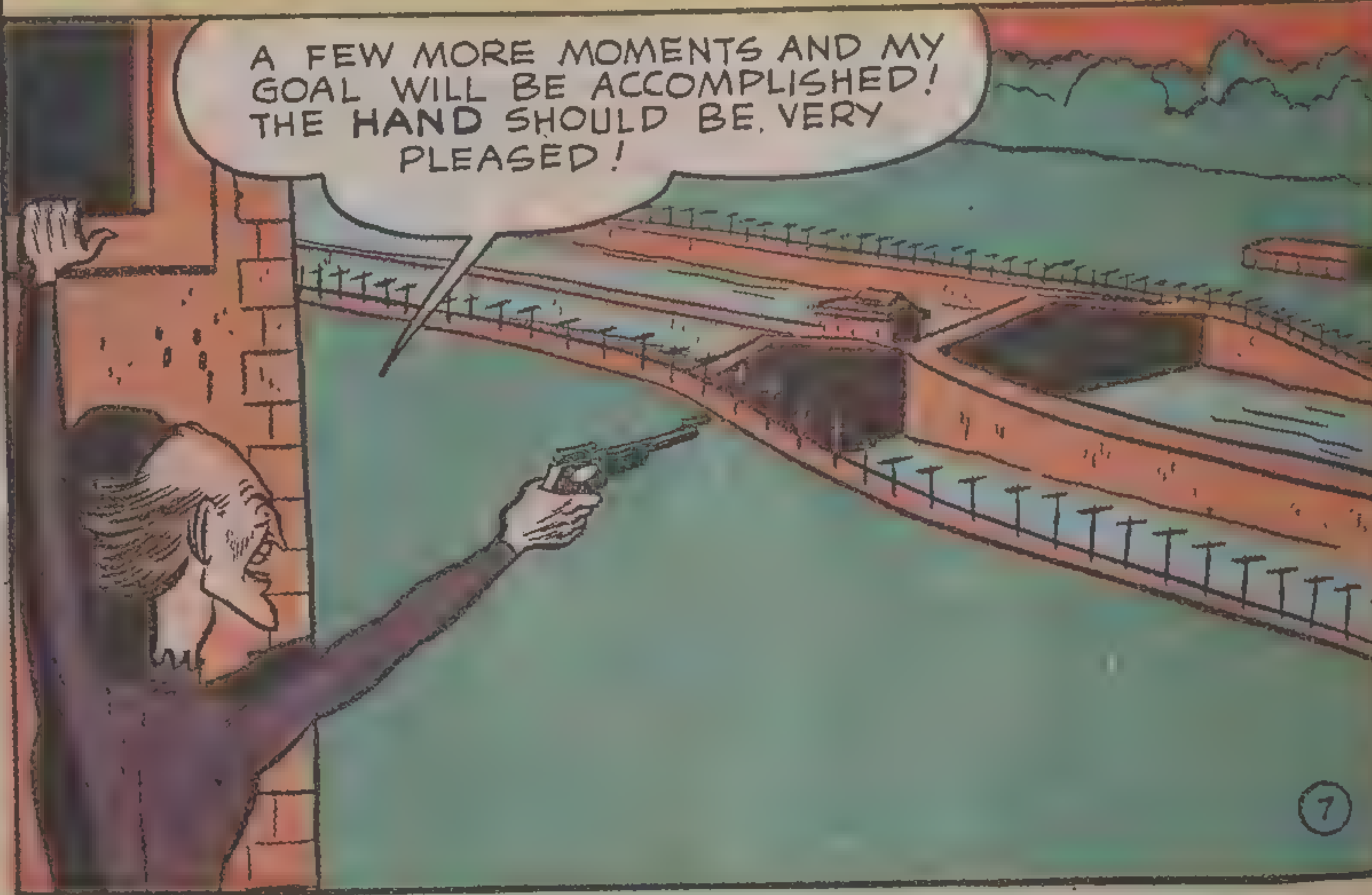


HAI HA!-HOW DEVASTATINGLY POWERFUL THIS RAY-GUN IS! AND IT'S MINE... ALL MINE...!!! AND NOW...THE DESTRUCTION OF THE PANAMA CANAL!



THE TALL TOWER OF TREACHERY LEVELS HIS LETHAL WEAPON AT ONE OF THE NEARBY CANAL LOCKS...

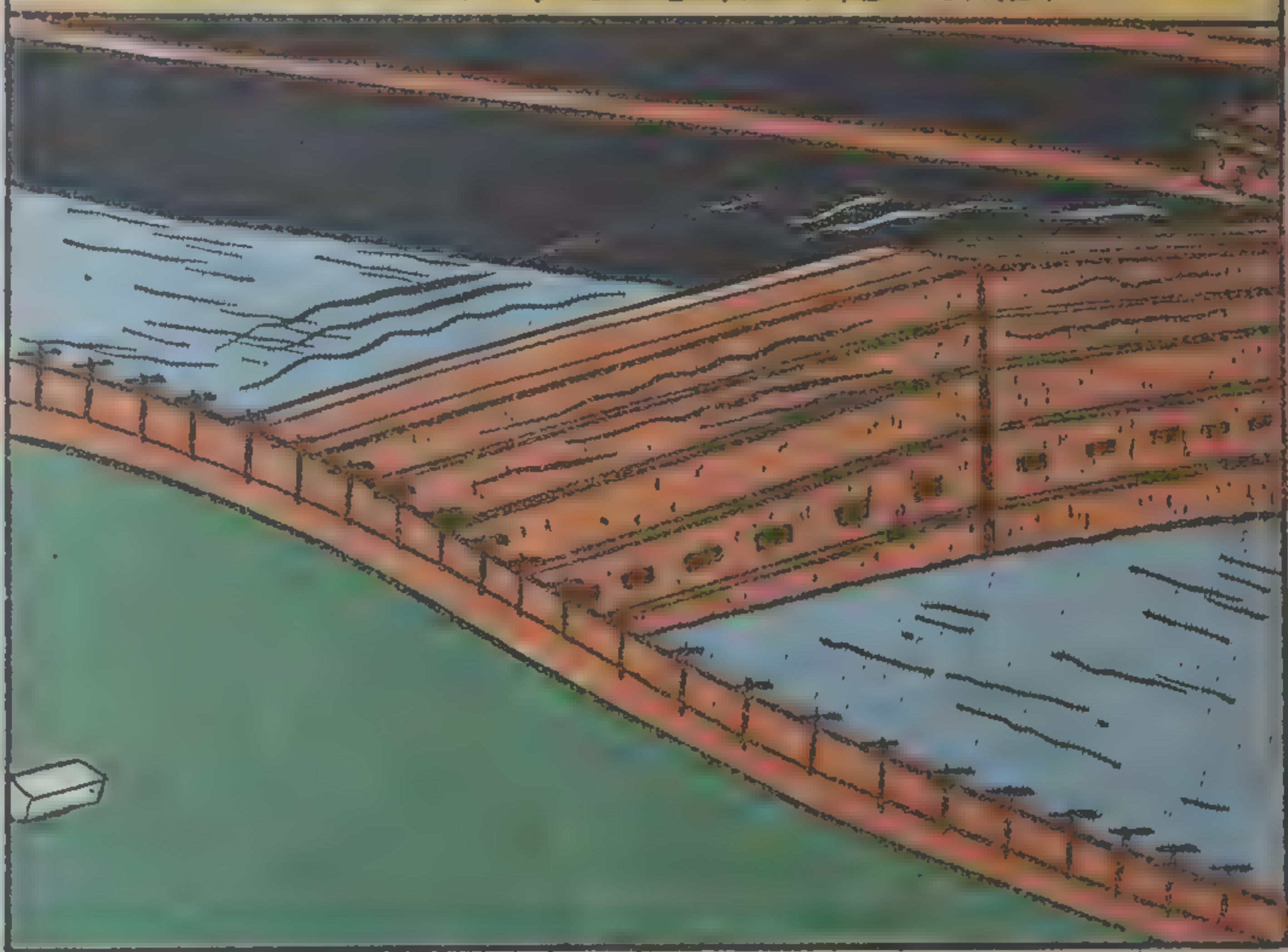
A FEW MORE MOMENTS AND MY GOAL WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED! THE HAND SHOULD BE VERY PLEASED!



OUT TOWARD THE CANAL LOCK STABS THE DEADLY RAY....



PRELIMINARY VIBRATIONS SHAKE THE LOCK IN ANTICIPATION OF THE VIOLENT DESTRUCTION TO COME!



AN UNEXPECTED INTERRUPTION! DOWN PLUNGES THE STAR-ROCKET RACER, AUTOGIRO BLADES WHIRLING, TO REMAIN STATIONARY IN THE RAY'S VERY PATH...

WHAT--? THE STAR-SPANGLED KID!!!



LUCKY THING FER US, KID, THAT TH' RACER AN' GLASSOLITE SHIELD ARE BOTH INVULNERABLE TO SHELLS AN' RAYS!

A TRIBUTE TO YOUR GENIUS, STRIPESY!



BUT THE NEEDLE HIMSELF IS NOT SO FORTUNATE! DEFLECTED BACK BY THE RACER'S RAY-PROOF SHIELD, THE DEADLY RAYS RICOCHET, CAUSING THE SUPPORTS BENEATH THE TALL TOWER OF TREACHERY TO CRUMBLE..

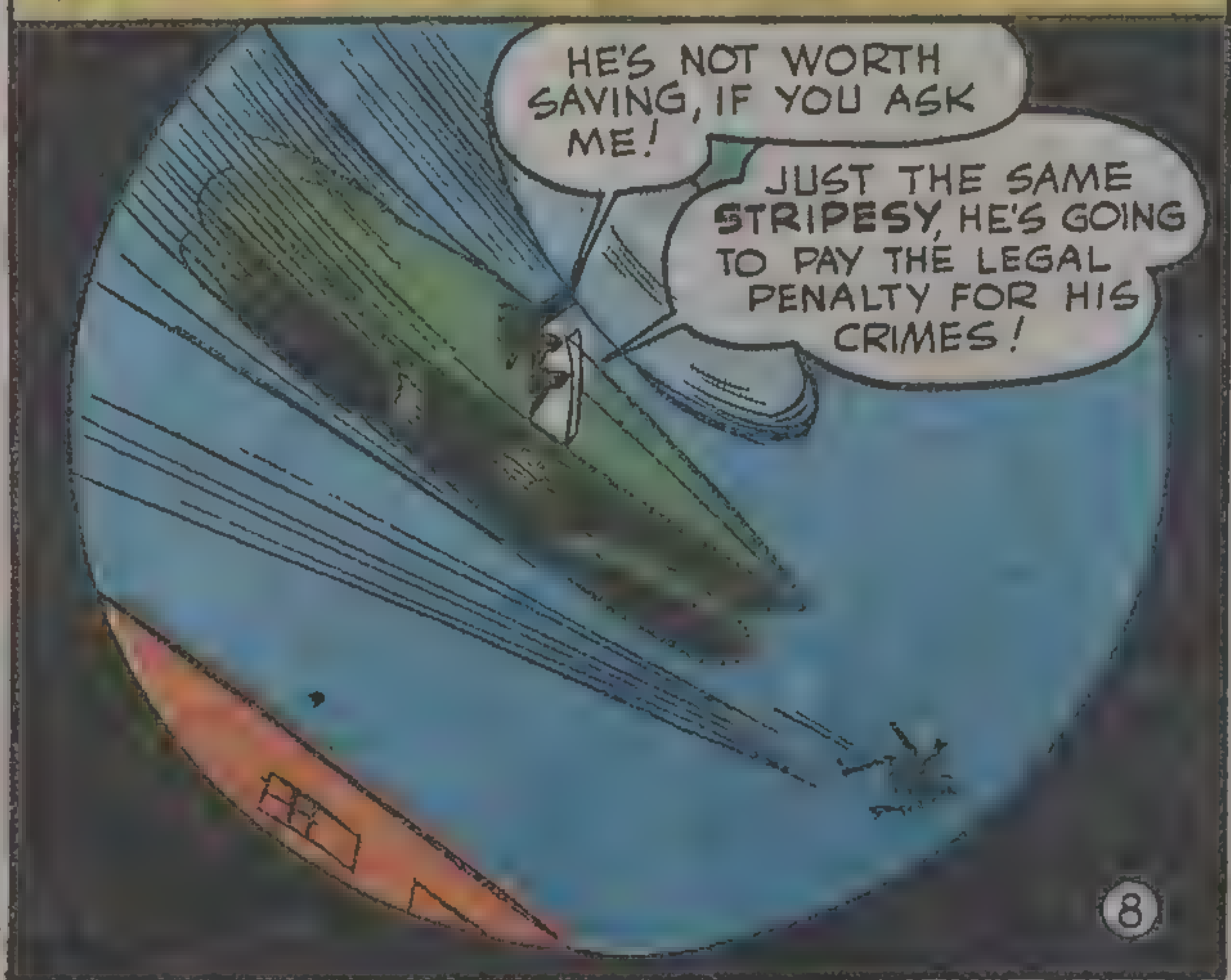
DOWN TOPPLES THE KINGPIN OF CRIME TOWARD INEVITABLE DEATH....!

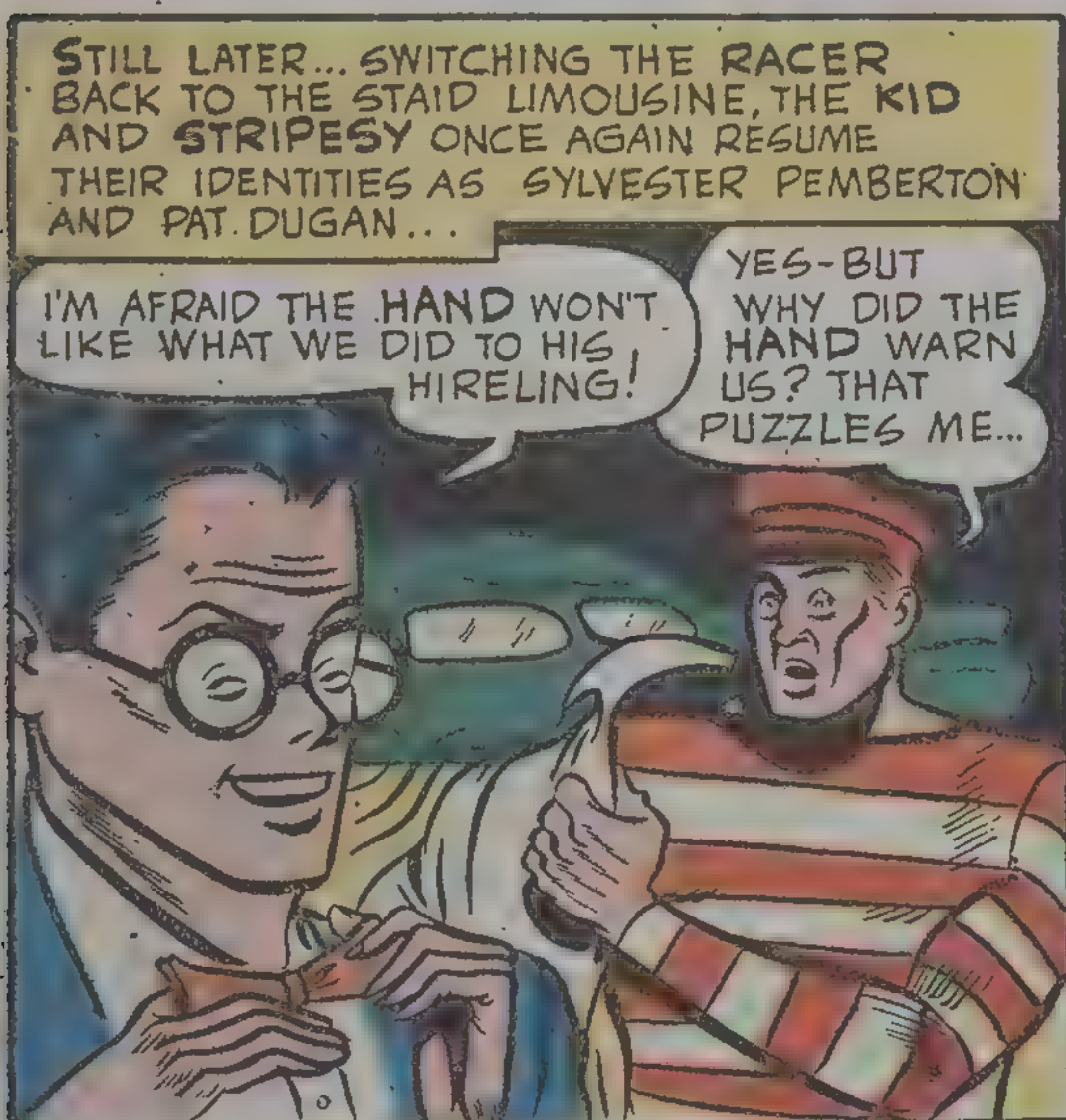
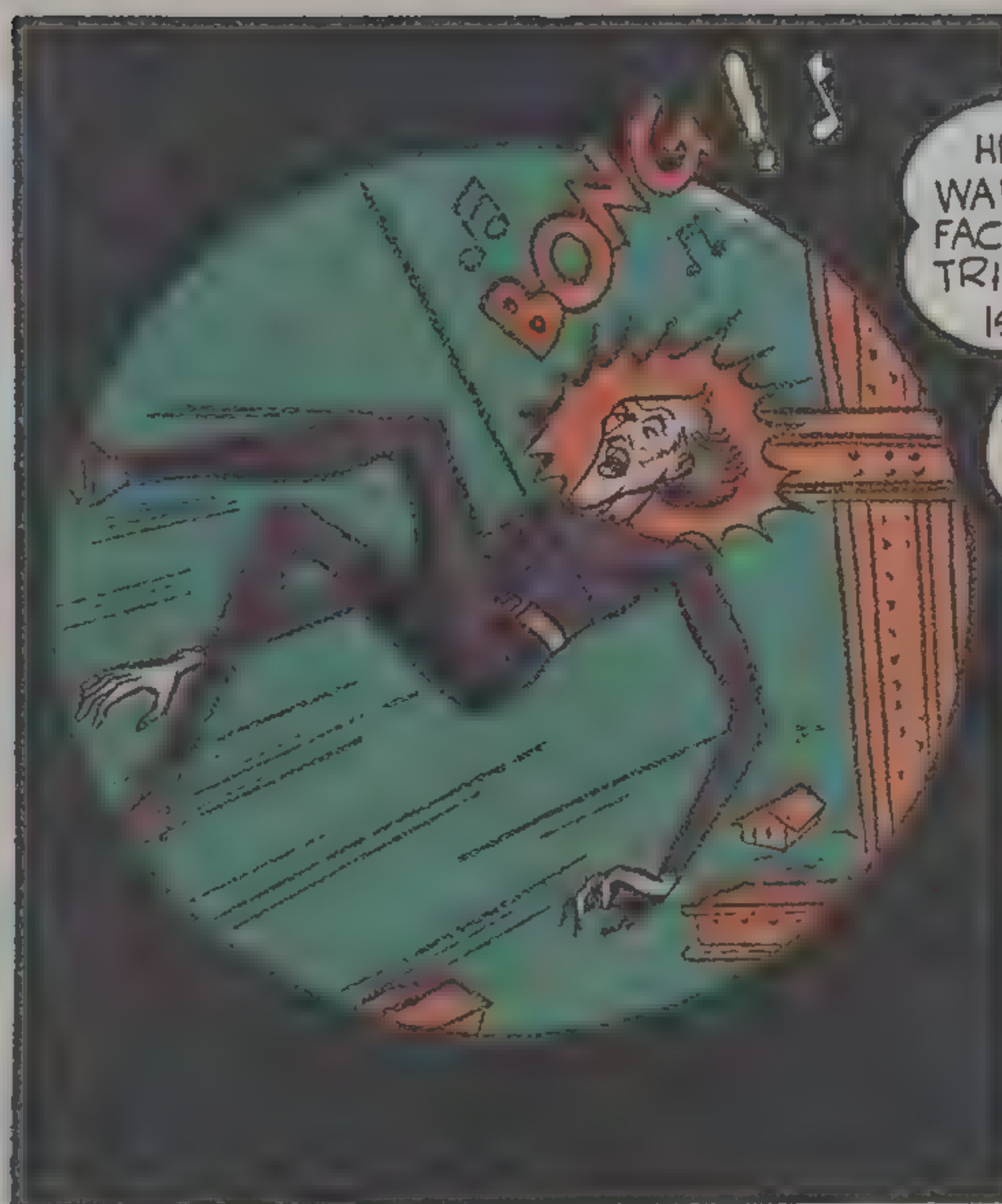


ROLLING BACK THE GLASSOLITE SHIELD, THE PARTNERS IN PERIL DIVE THE RACER DOWN AFTER THE PLUMMETING NEEDLE....

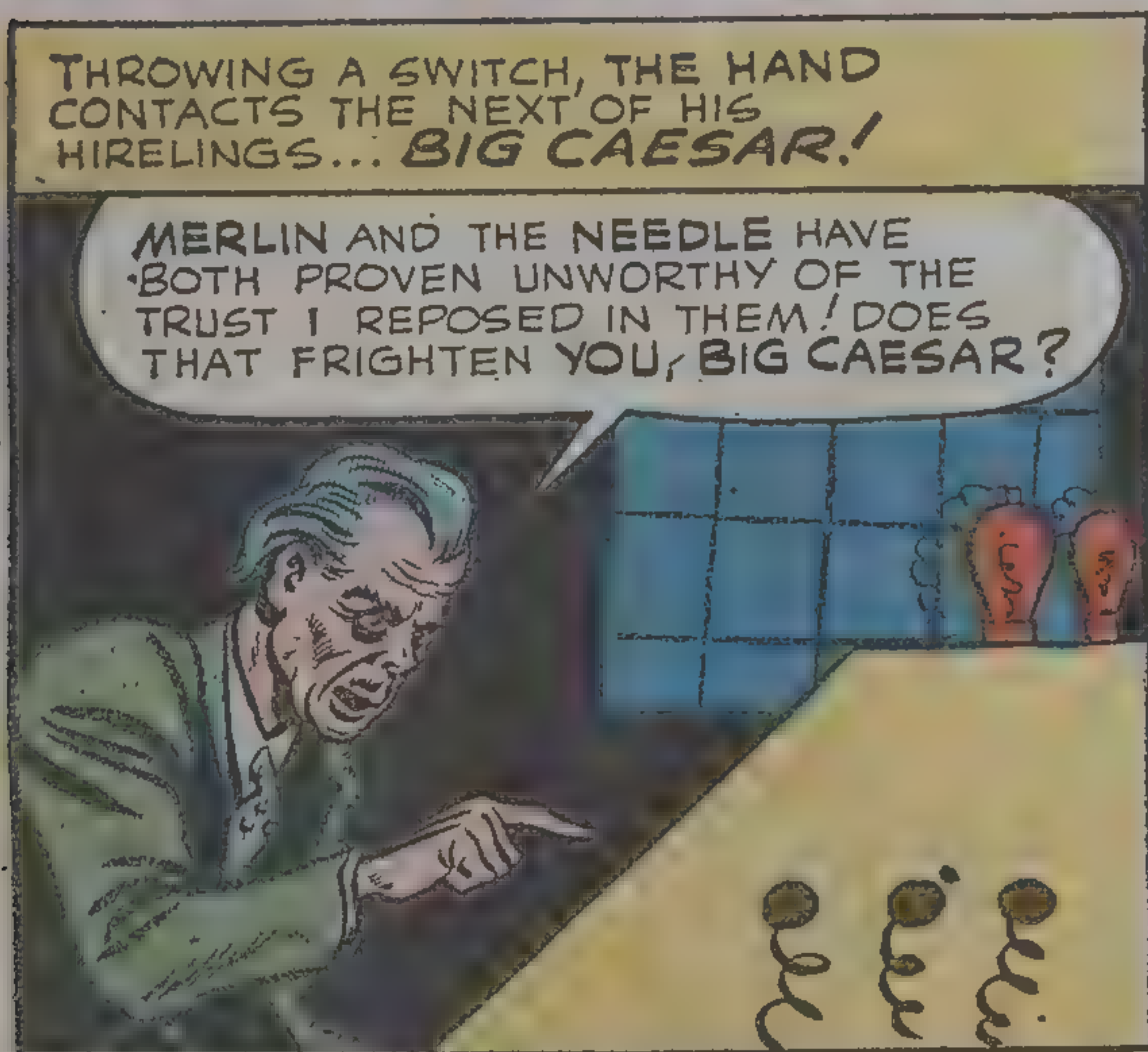
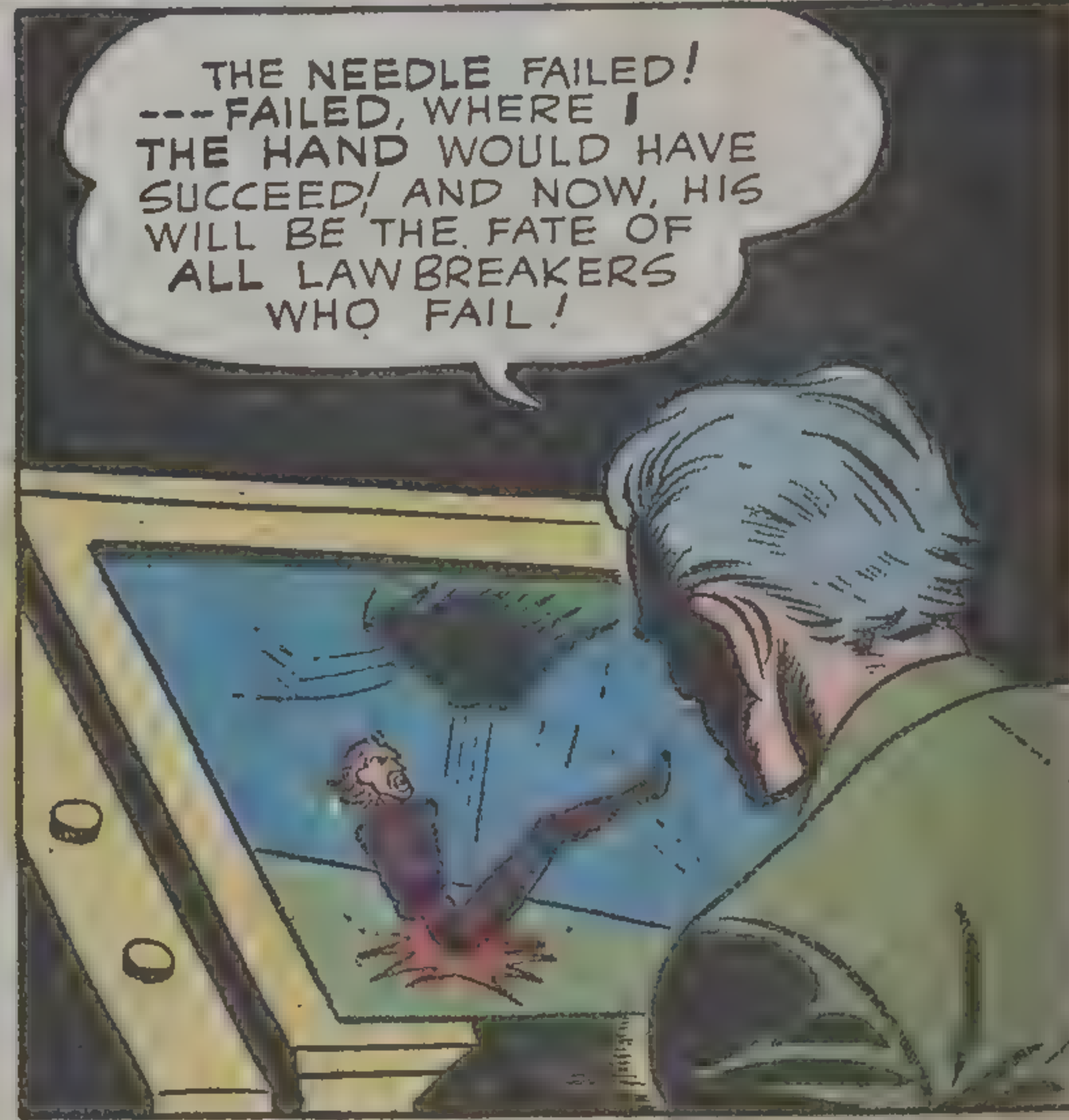
HE'S NOT WORTH SAVING, IF YOU ASK ME!

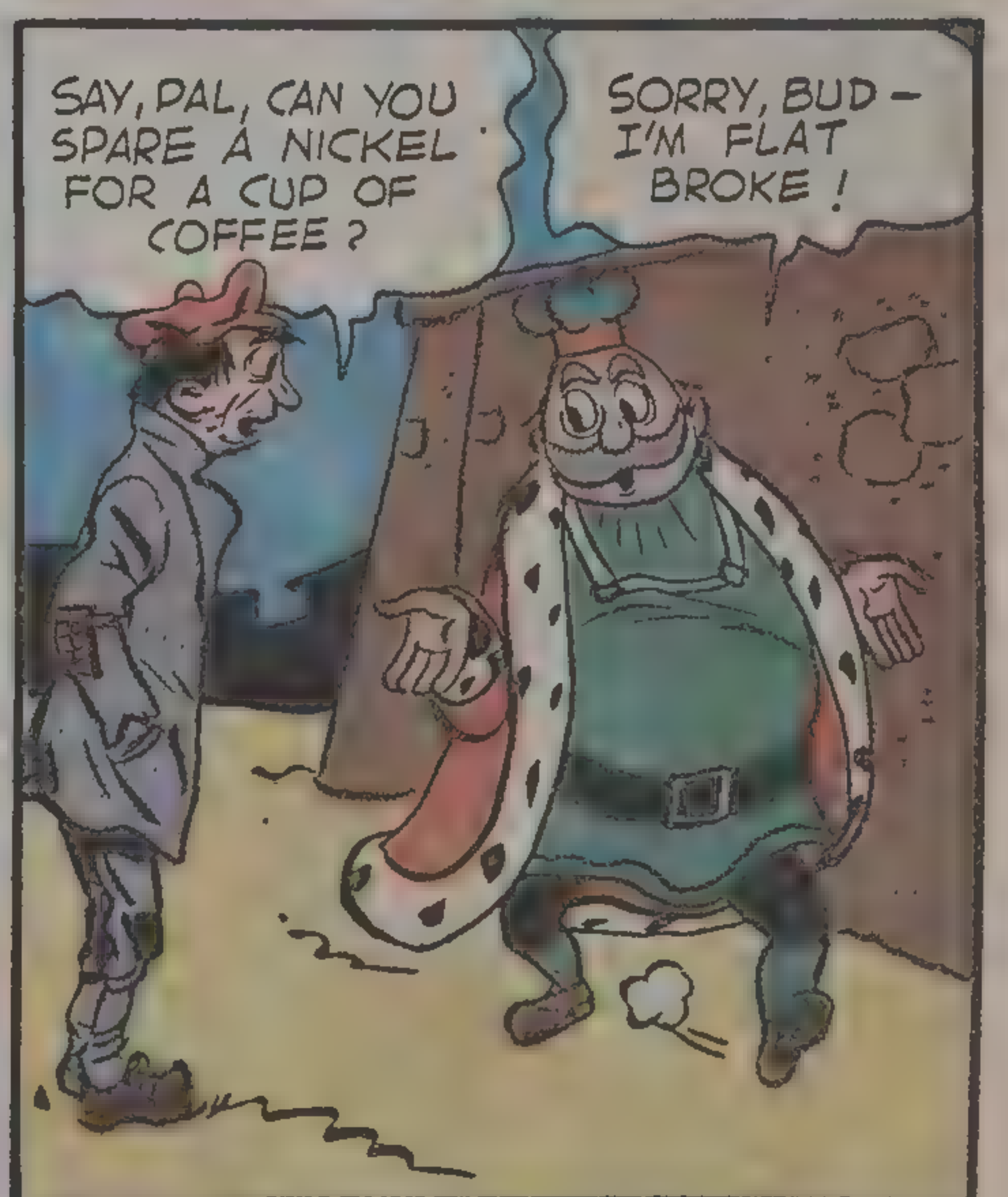
JUST THE SAME STRIPESY, HE'S GOING TO PAY THE LEGAL PENALTY FOR HIS CRIMES!

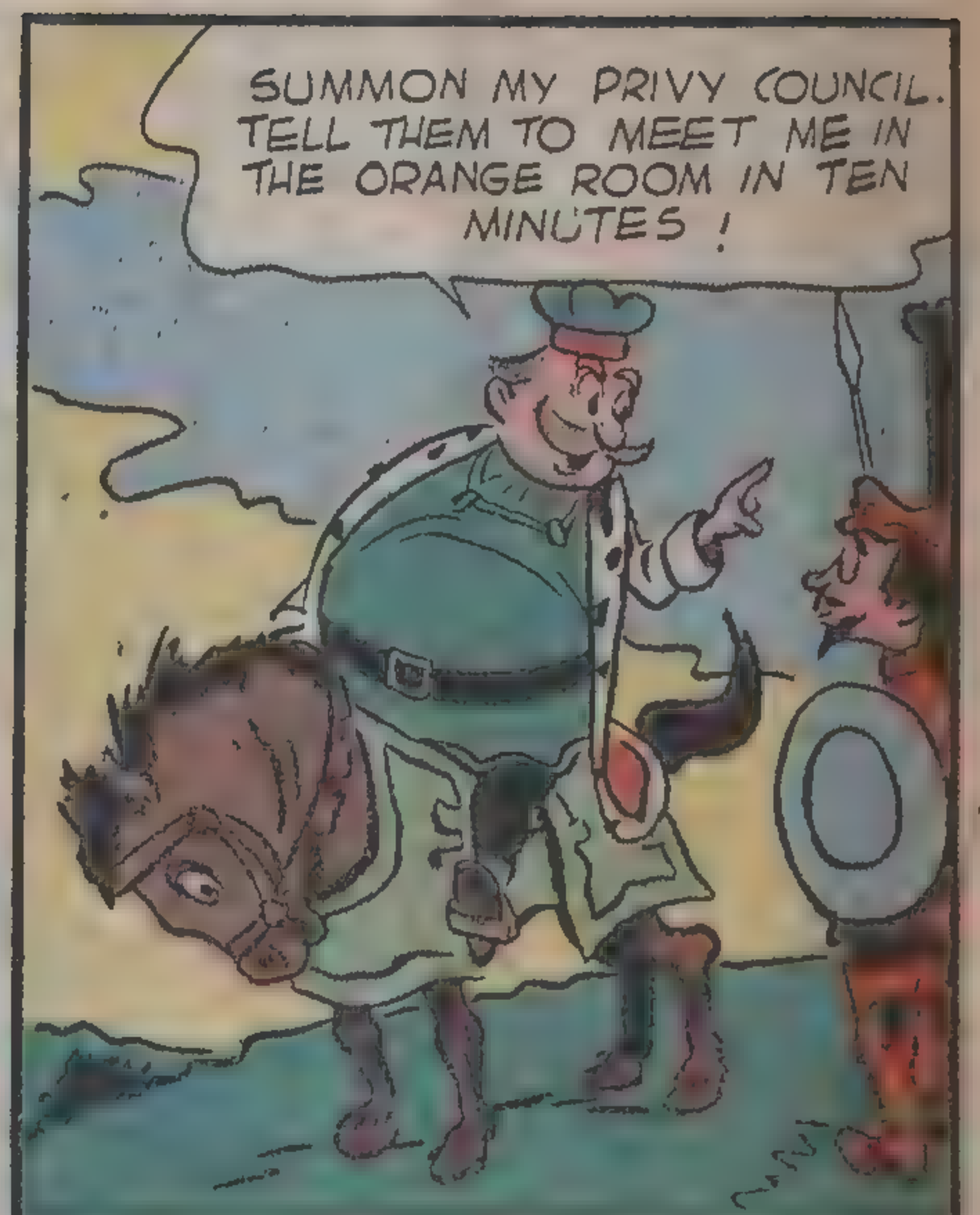




MEANWHILE, THE HAND HAS BEEN FOLLOWING THE NEEDLE'S PROGRESS (OR LACK OF IT) ON THE SCREEN OF HIS ELECTRO-TELEVISIO APPARATUS...







THE CRIMSON AVENGER

BY JACK IEHT!

THE GAY WHITE WAY!

GLAMOROUS GATEWAY TO HAPPINESS: WINKING LIGHTS; JUBILANT, CAREFREE CROWDS; ULTING LAUGHTER AND TOOTING TRAFFIC! THEN, ALL AT ONCE, DARKNESS—TENSE AND TERRIFYING, FOR BIG CAESAR, SINISTER EMISSARY OF THE HAND HAS LAUNCHED A BLACKOUT OVER BROADWAY! INTO THIS HOLOCAUST OF HORROR STRIKES THE CRIMSON AVENGER WITH UNRELENTING ENERGY UNTIL IT IS LIGHTS ON IN TIMES SQUARE BUT LIGHTS OUT FOR BIG CAESAR!



THE RAILROAD TERMINAL—AND THE NEW YORK LIMITED DISCHARGES ITS PASSENGERS!

WE MADE GOOD TIME. DIDN'T WANT TO RISK FLYING BECAUSE THE HAND MIGHT HAVE ANTICIPATED THAT AND TAMPERED WITH THE PLANE!

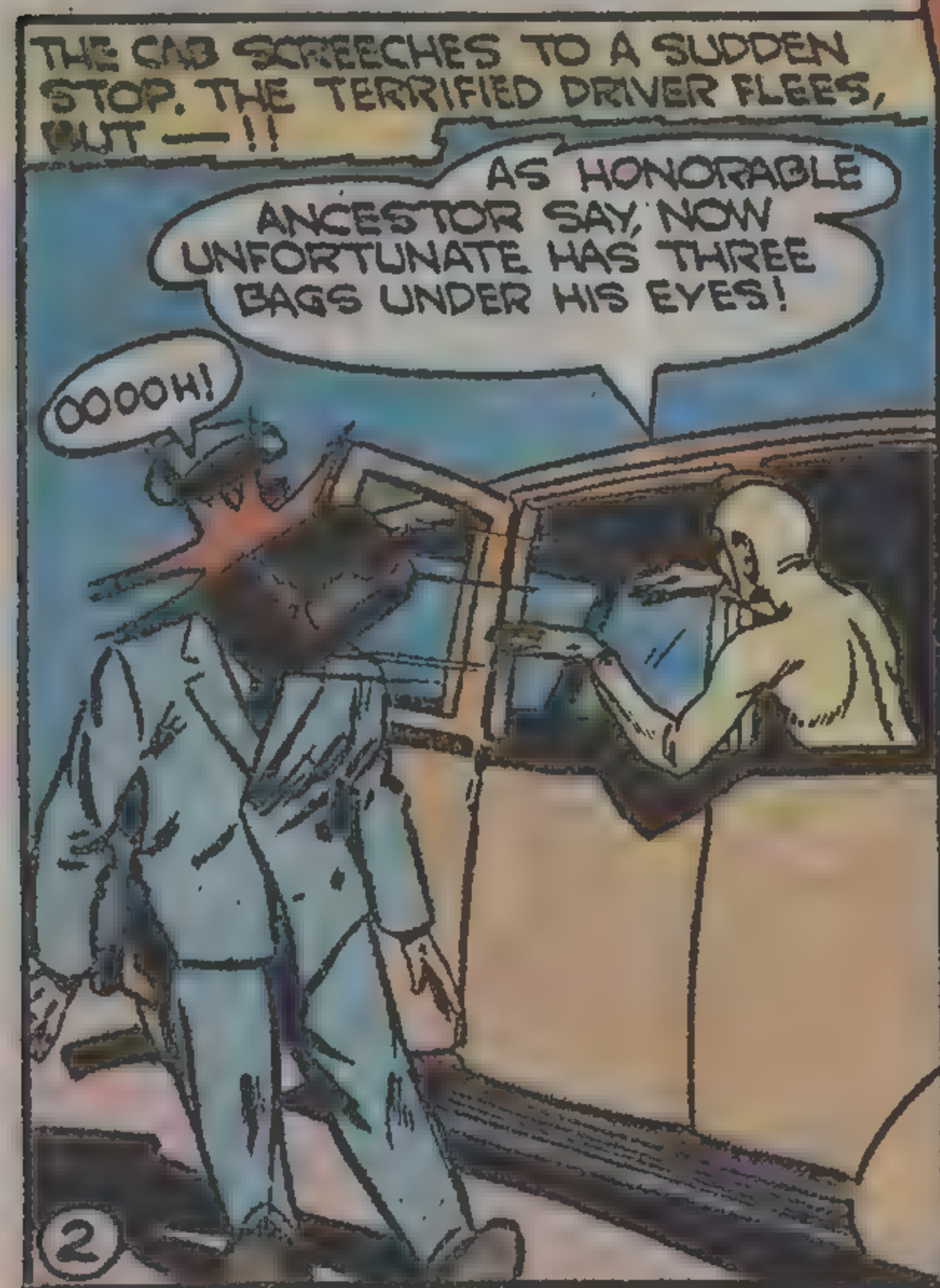
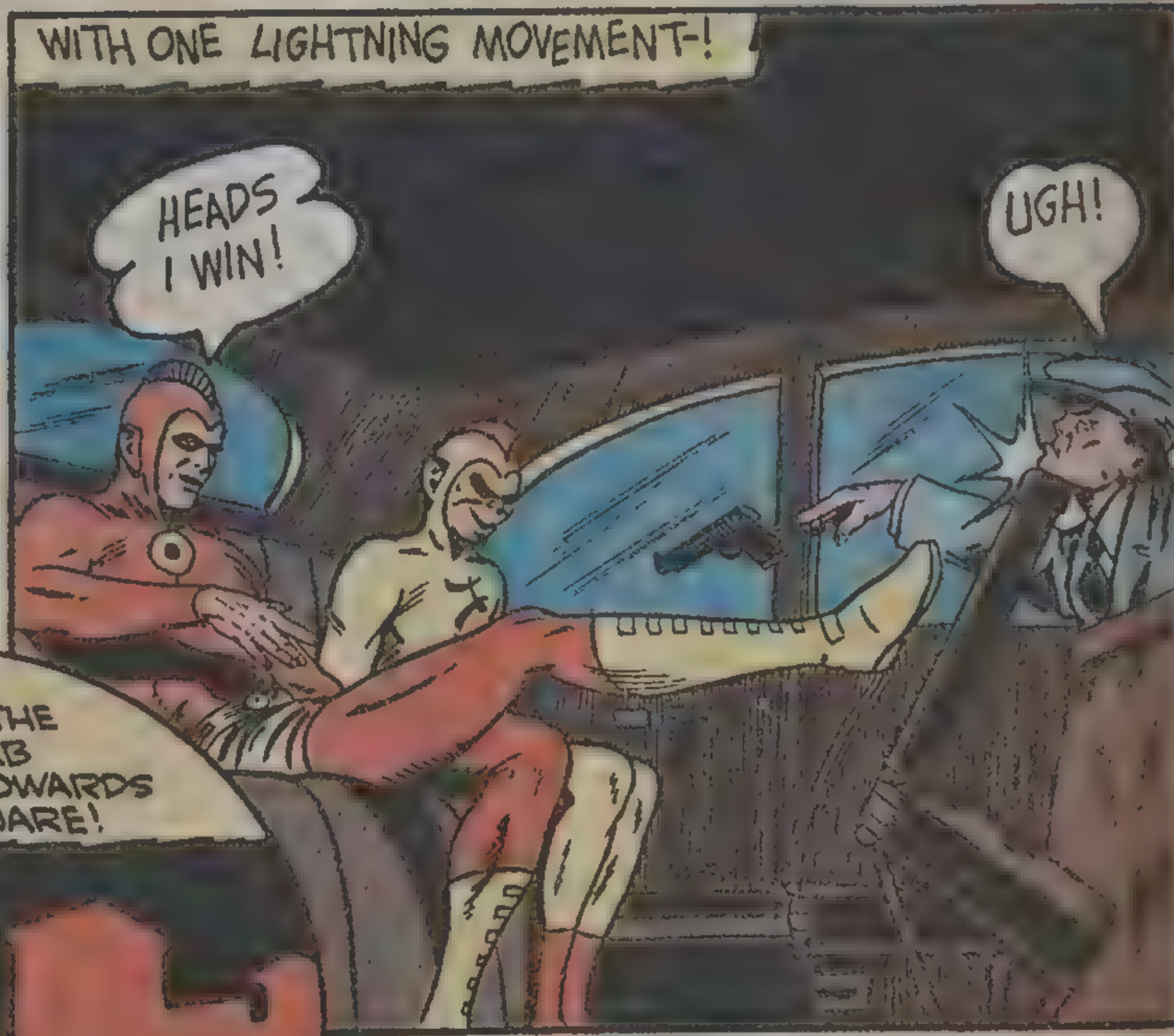
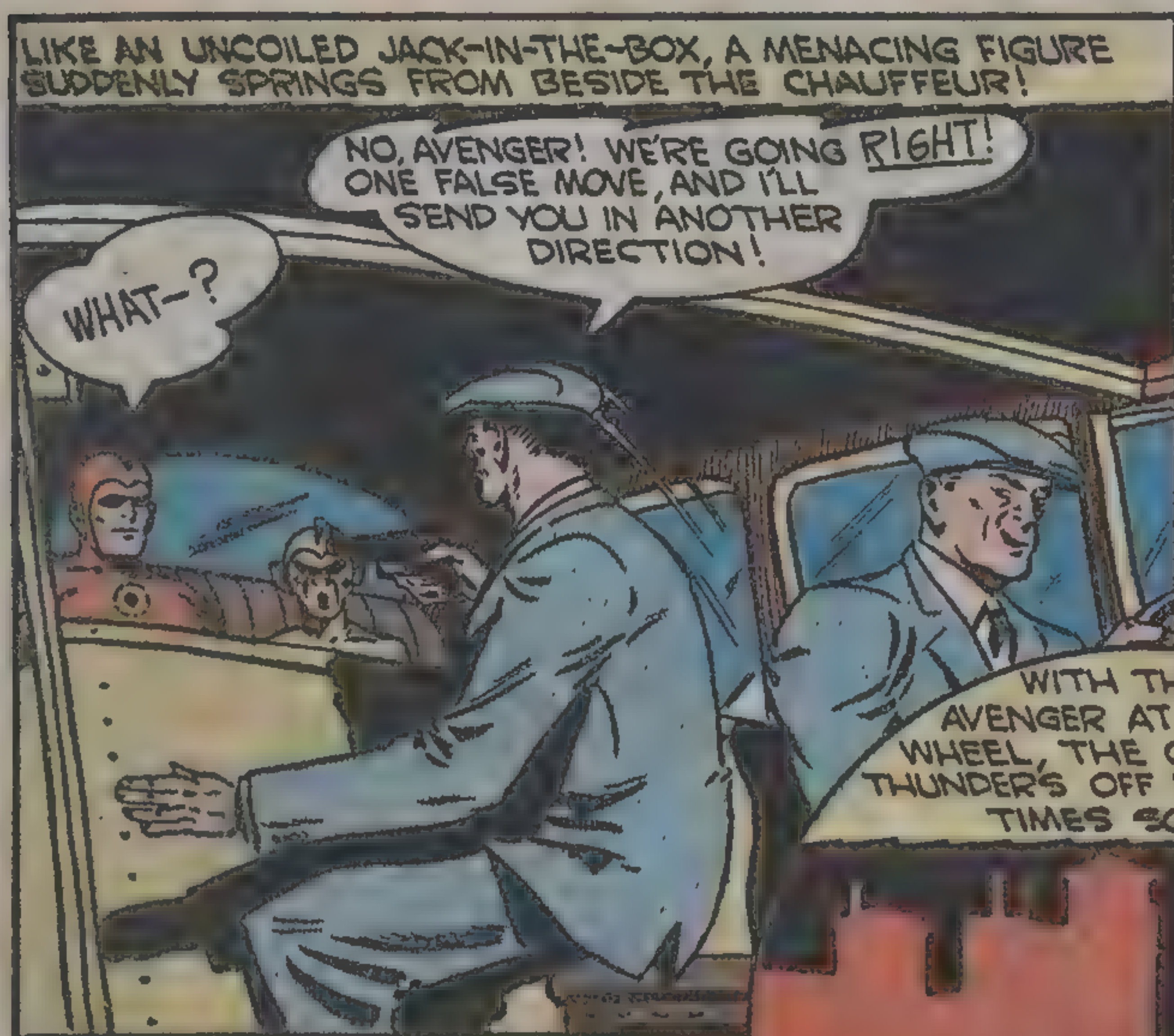
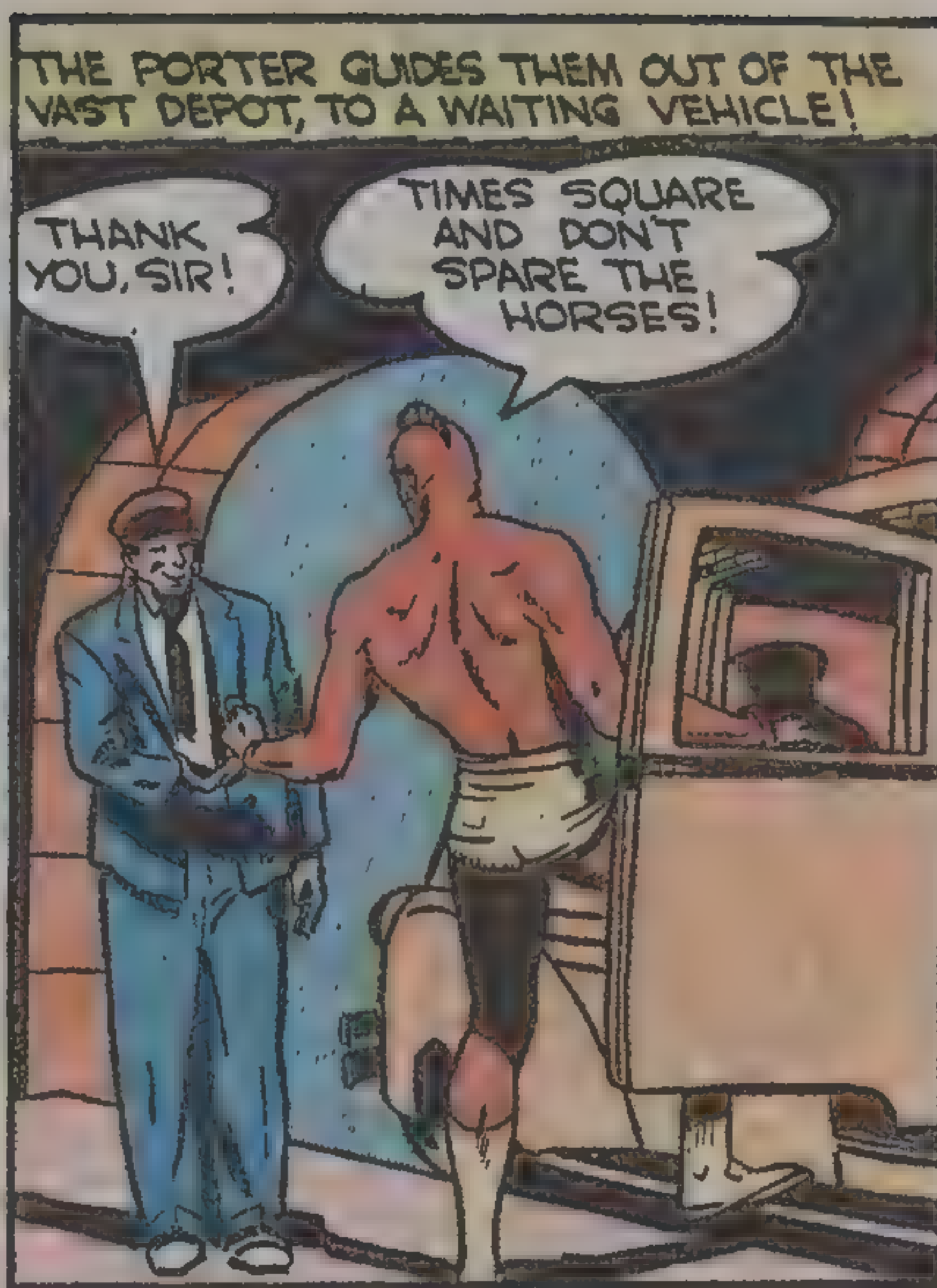


IMAGINE THE TROUBLE HE WENT TO! PUTTING THIS AD IN THE PERSONAL COLUMN OF EVERY PAPER IN THE COUNTRY TO GET MY ATTENTION!

MOST IMPORTANT HE CONTACT YOU TO TRY TO STOP CRIME!



PERSONAL COLUMN
ATTENTION, CRIMSON AVENGER! CHALLENGE YOU TO THAWART THE MOST DARING ROBBERY EVER COMMITTED ON BROADWAY!
THE HAND
ATTENTION, JAMES



BUT AS QUICKLY AS THEY WENT OUT,
THE LIGHTS FLASH ON AGAIN!

VELLY
STLANGE!
MAYBE ALL
BLACK
TEST—

A BLACKOUT EXPERIMENT?
I HARDLY THINK SO.
THE WIRE SERVICES
DIDN'T REPORT ANY
SUCH THING!

I'VE GOT
IT, WING! THAT WAS
A BLACKOUT OVER
BROADWAY! BUT WHY? WHAT
WAS THE MOTIVE? CAN IT
POSSIBLY BE CONNECTED WITH
THE HAND?

LOOK AT YOUR
ELBOW! IT'S GOT
RED PAINT. YOU
MUST HAVE BRUSHED
AGAINST SOMETHING!

IS STILL
WET. FRESH
PAINT—

WHILE ONLY A FEW FEET AWAY, IN THE
MIDDLE OF BROADWAY—

THIS IS A CINCH!
RIGHT IN THE HEART
OF THE CITY. NO ONE
WOULD EVER DREAM
OF LOOKING FOR US
HERE!

THE BLACKOUT
WORKED
PERFECTLY!
WE'VE GOT TO
GIVE THE
HAND A
HAND!

—AND A FRESH CLUE!
THAT SIGN WAS JUST
PAINTED! AND C'MERE,
LOOK AT THIS. DOESN'T
IT STRIKE YOU ODD?

WHAT? I
DON'T
UNDERSTAND!

THESE WIRES LEAD TO THE
WEST SIDE POWERHOUSE,
WHICH LIGHTS UP BROADWAY.
THIS HIDEOUT IS SO OBVIOUS
WE'RE NOT EVEN SUSPECTED—
EVEN BY THE CRIMSON AVENGER,
IF HE'S GOTTEN THIS FAR, BUT
I THINK THE REDCAPS I
PLANTED IN THE TERMINAL
DETOURED HIM!

THE HANDS
AND FACES
OF THOSE
MEN ARE
CLEAN. THEIR
OVERALLS ARE
NEW—

—AND THEY ARE
WORKING, SO IT
IS PROVEN
THEY ARE NOT
WPA LABORERS!

I THINK I'LL HAVE A
WORD WITH THEM. SAY,
YOU—DOWN THERE!

PSSST! BIG
CAESAR!
LOOK WHO'S
HERE!

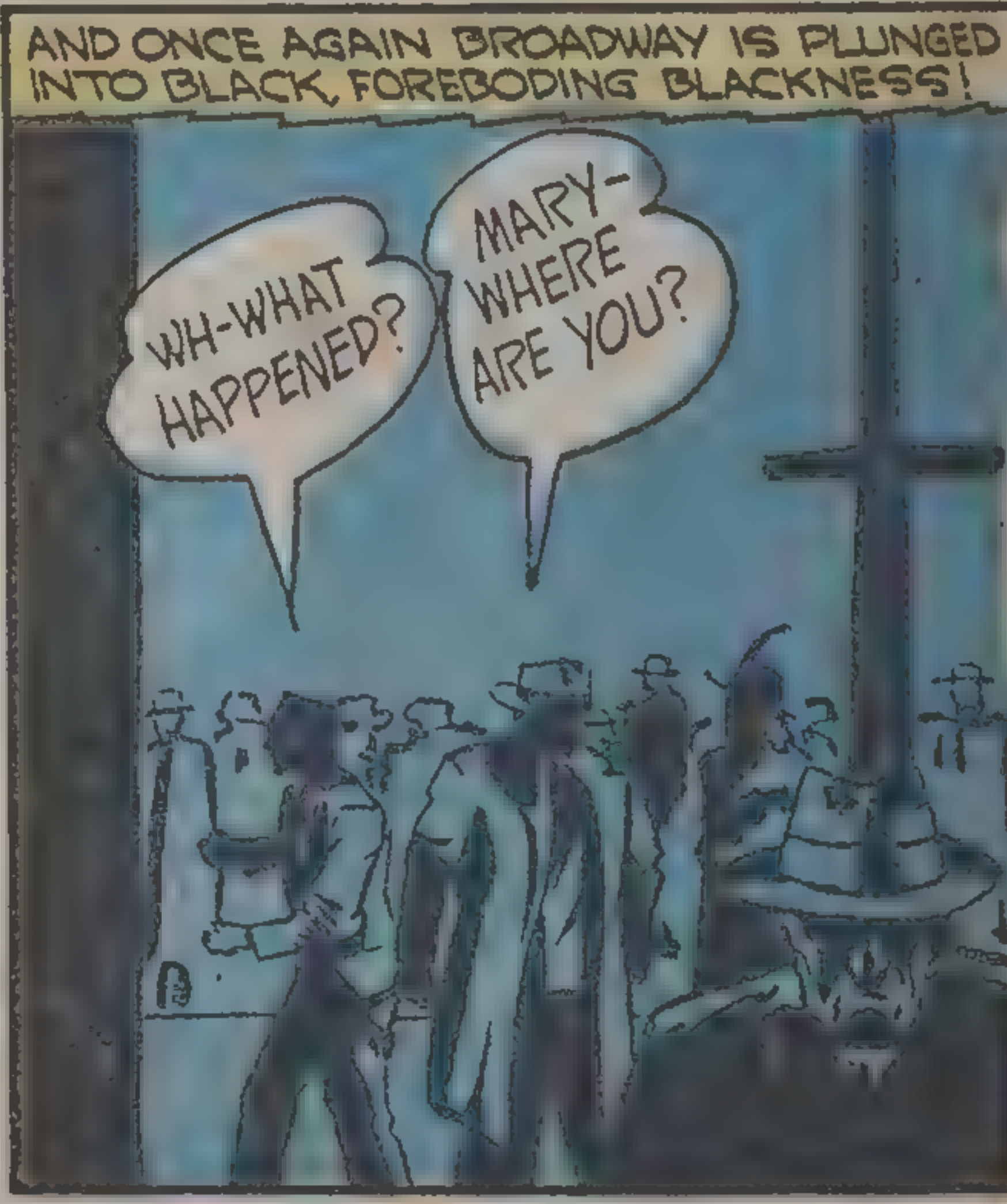
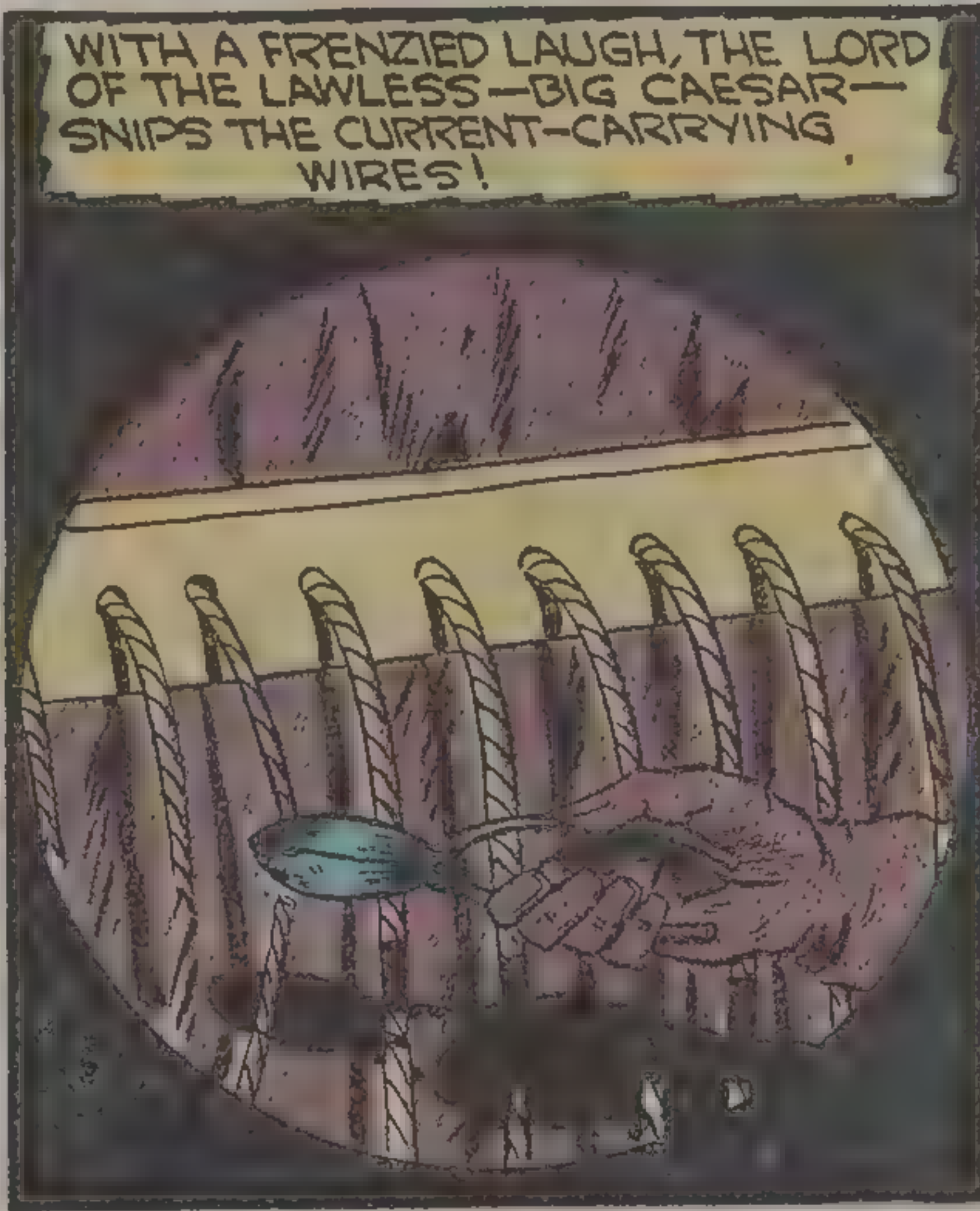
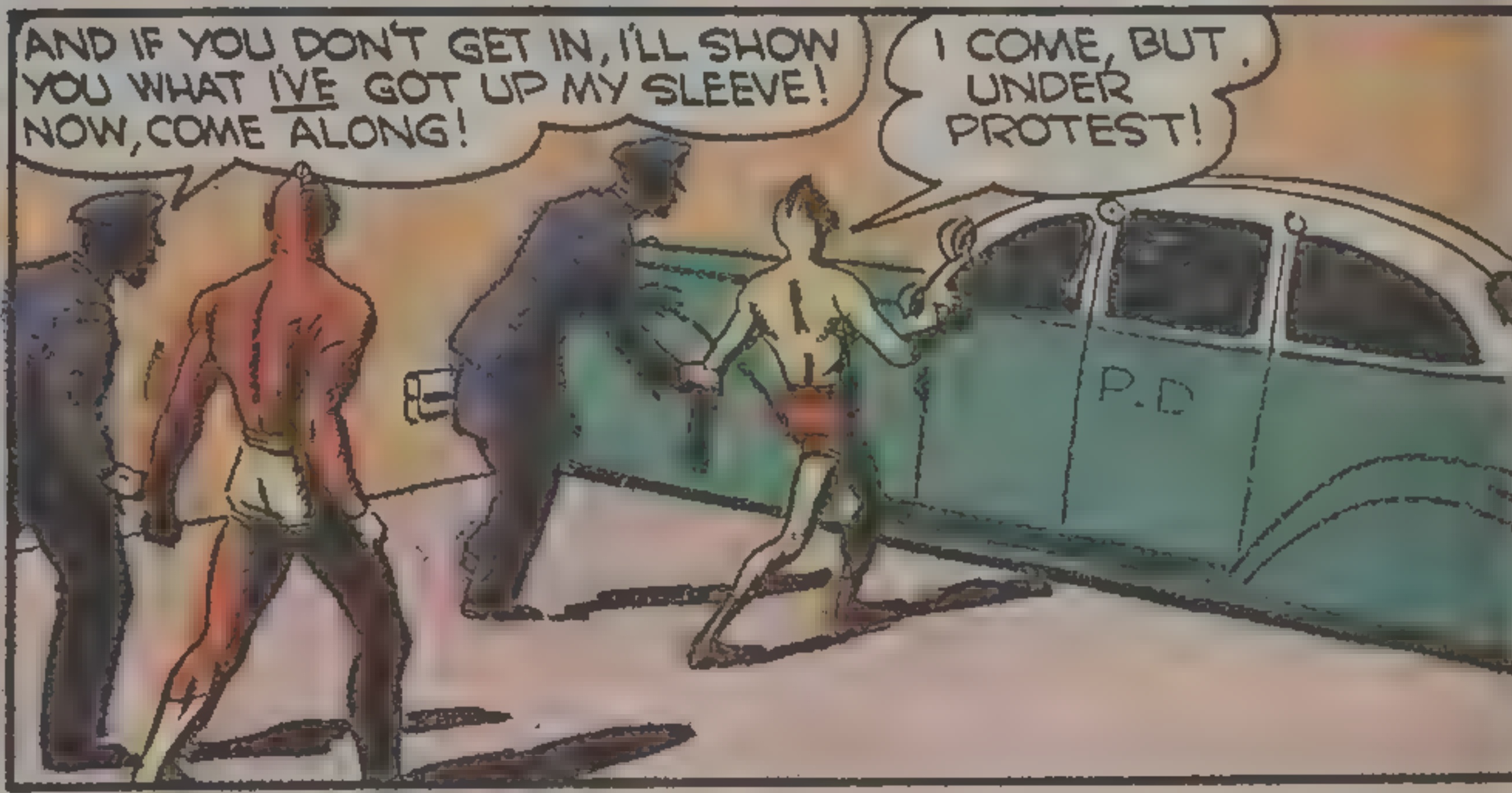
THE CRIMSON
AVENGER!
HOLY COW!


THOSE MUGGS
LET HIM
GET AWAY!

LEMME
OUTTA
HERE!

STAND WHERE
YOU ARE! IT'S
GONNA BE ALL
RIGHT. I GOT
EVERYTHING
FIXED JUST IN
CASE HE SHOWED
UP. AINT I,
GUNNER?

YEAH! ONE OF
YOU GIMME
A HAND. I
WANT TO GET
UP THERE!





PARALYZED BY FEAR, SHOCKED PEDESTRIANS FALL EASY PREY TO THE VICIOUS VANDALS, WHO HAD BEEN AWAITING THE SIGNAL OF DARKNESS AT THEIR POSTS. NOW BEGINS THE WHOLESALE HOLD-UP; NOW IS UNLEASHED THE TERROR OF TIMES SQUARE!

CONFRONTED BY ABSOLUTE DARKNESS, THE POLICE CAR SUDDENLY STOPS!

HEY! WHAT'S THIS!

JUST WHAT I'VE BEEN TRYING TO WARN YOU!

THAT WAS BIG CAESAR! HE PLANNED THIS-- SET THE STAGE AND PULLED THE SWITCH TO BEGIN MASS ROBBERIES!

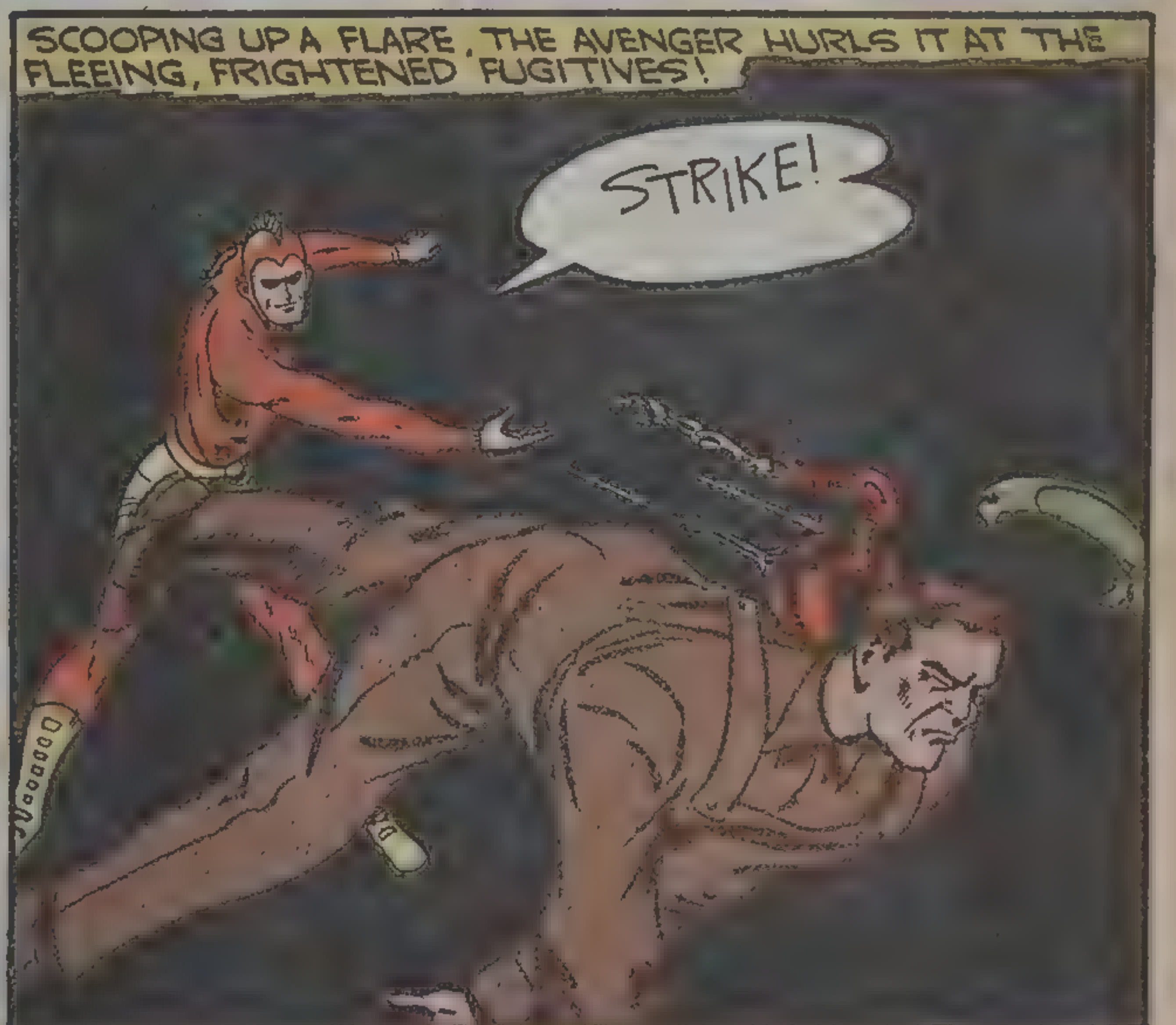
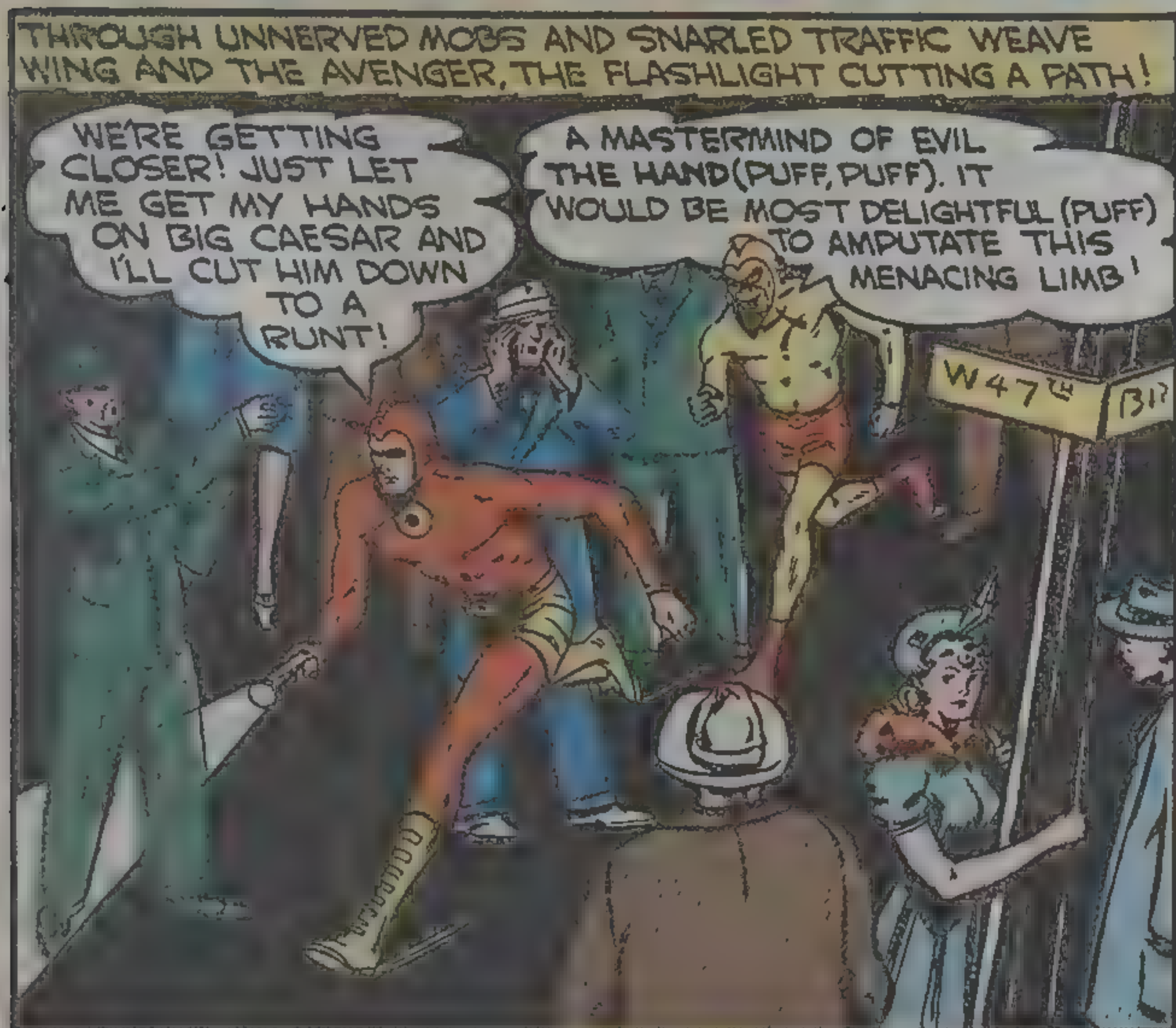
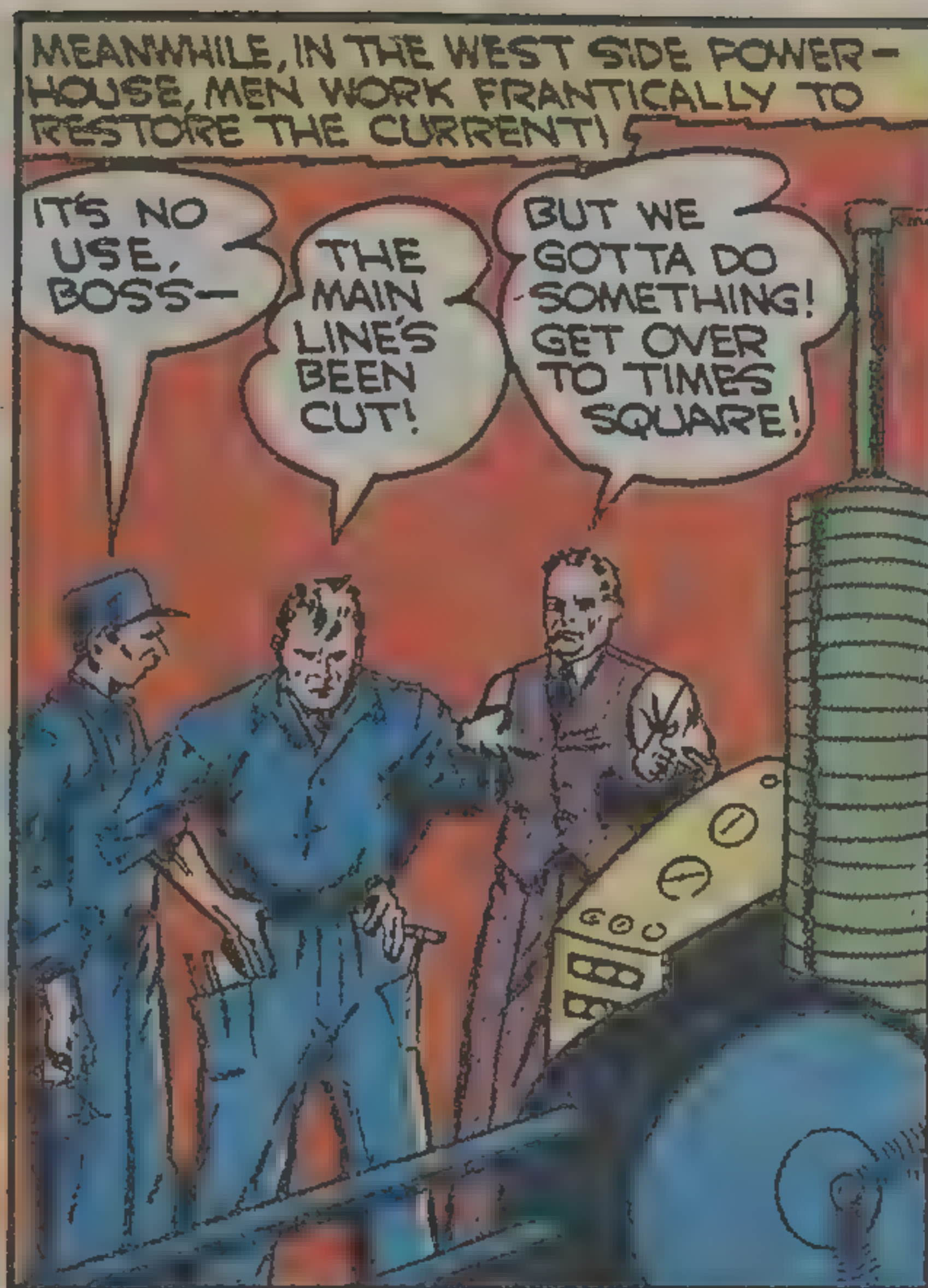
GOOD. GRAVY! YOU WERE GONNA PREVENT HIM--

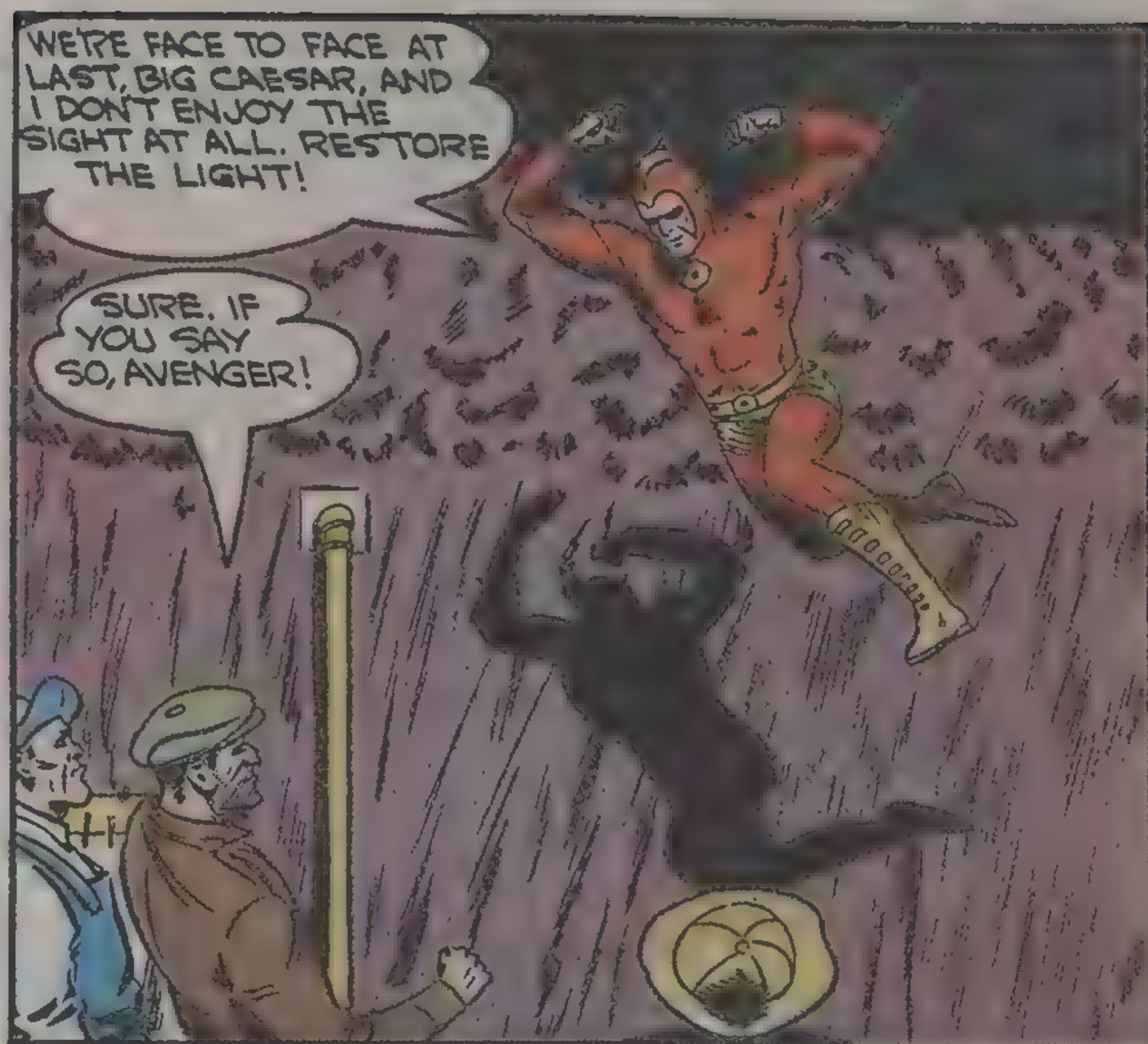
AND WE PULLED YOU AWAY!

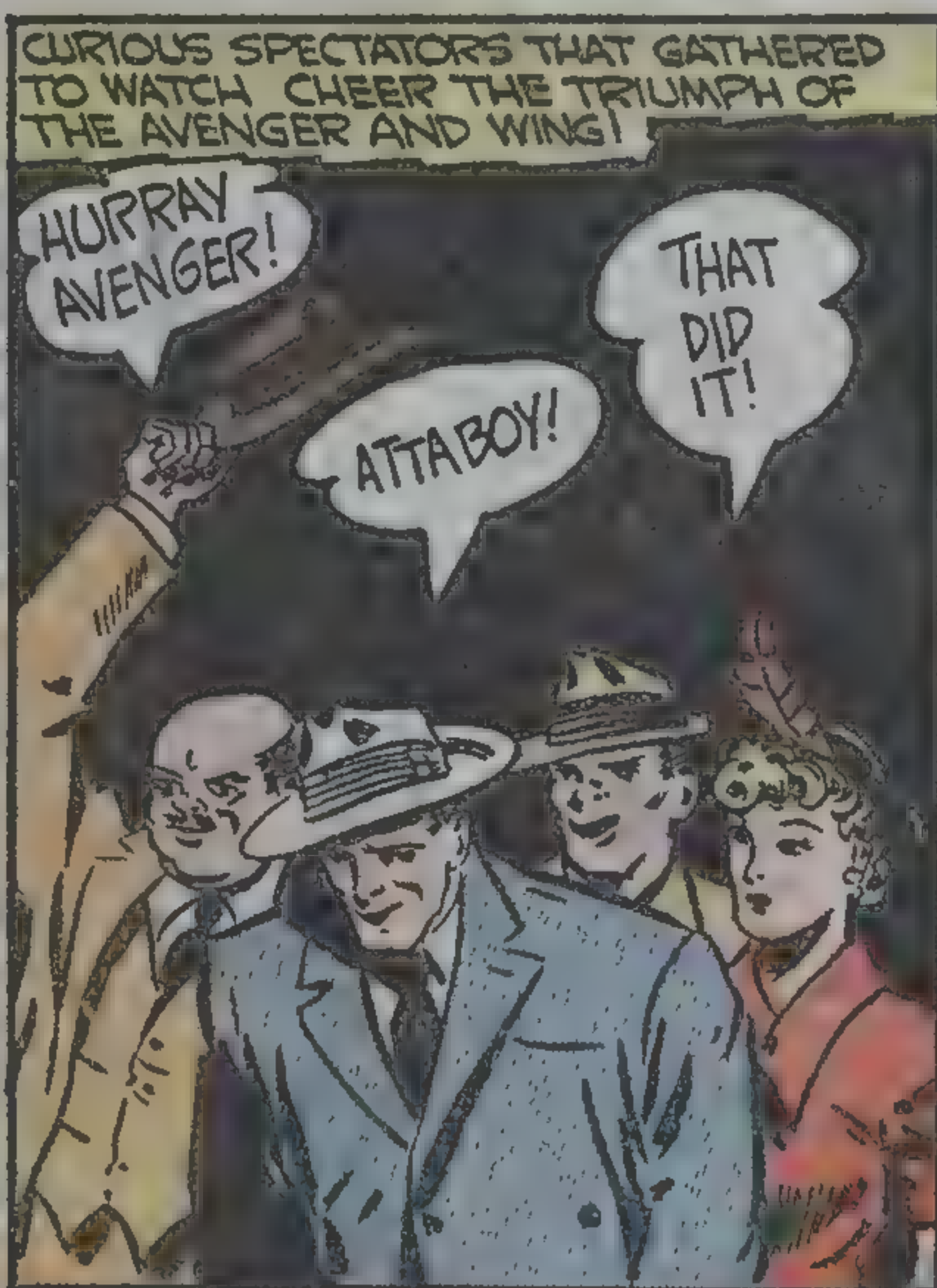
WE CAN'T DRIVE BACK. IT'D BE TOO DANGEROUS!

SURE! WE MIGHT RUN DOWN PEOPLE! EVERYBODY MUST BE RUNNIN' AROUND LIKE CRAZY!

WHILE WORDS TRICKLE FROM HONORABLE OFFICIALS' MOUTHS, GOLD FLOWS FROM OTHERS' POCKETS!









THERE THEY ARE, HUDDLED LIKE THE RATS THEY ARE, IN THEIR HOLE!

W-WHY, YOU MUST BE THE CRIMSON AVENGER!

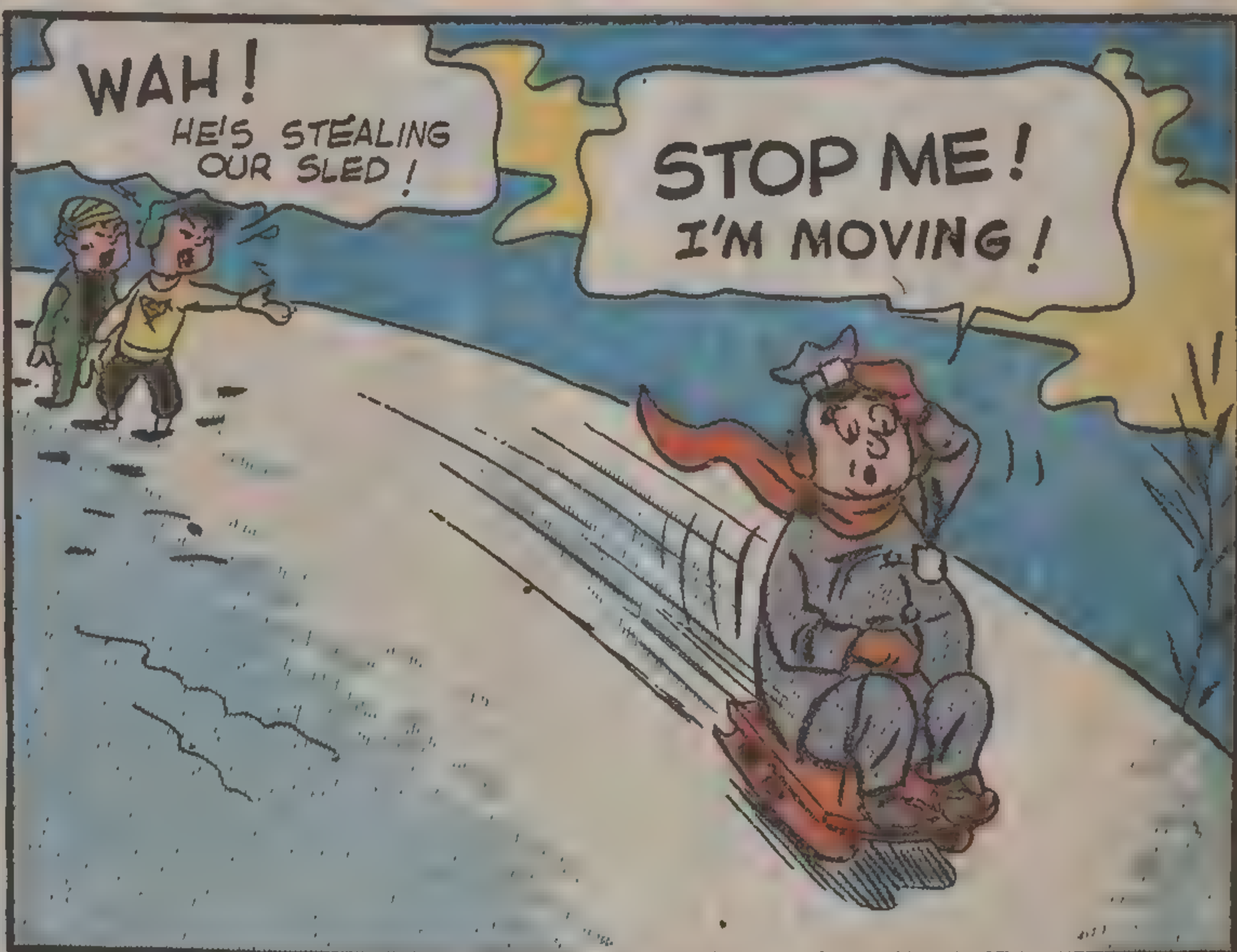
AND I AM WING, BUT WE WILL OVERLOOK YOUR IGNORANCE THIS TIME!

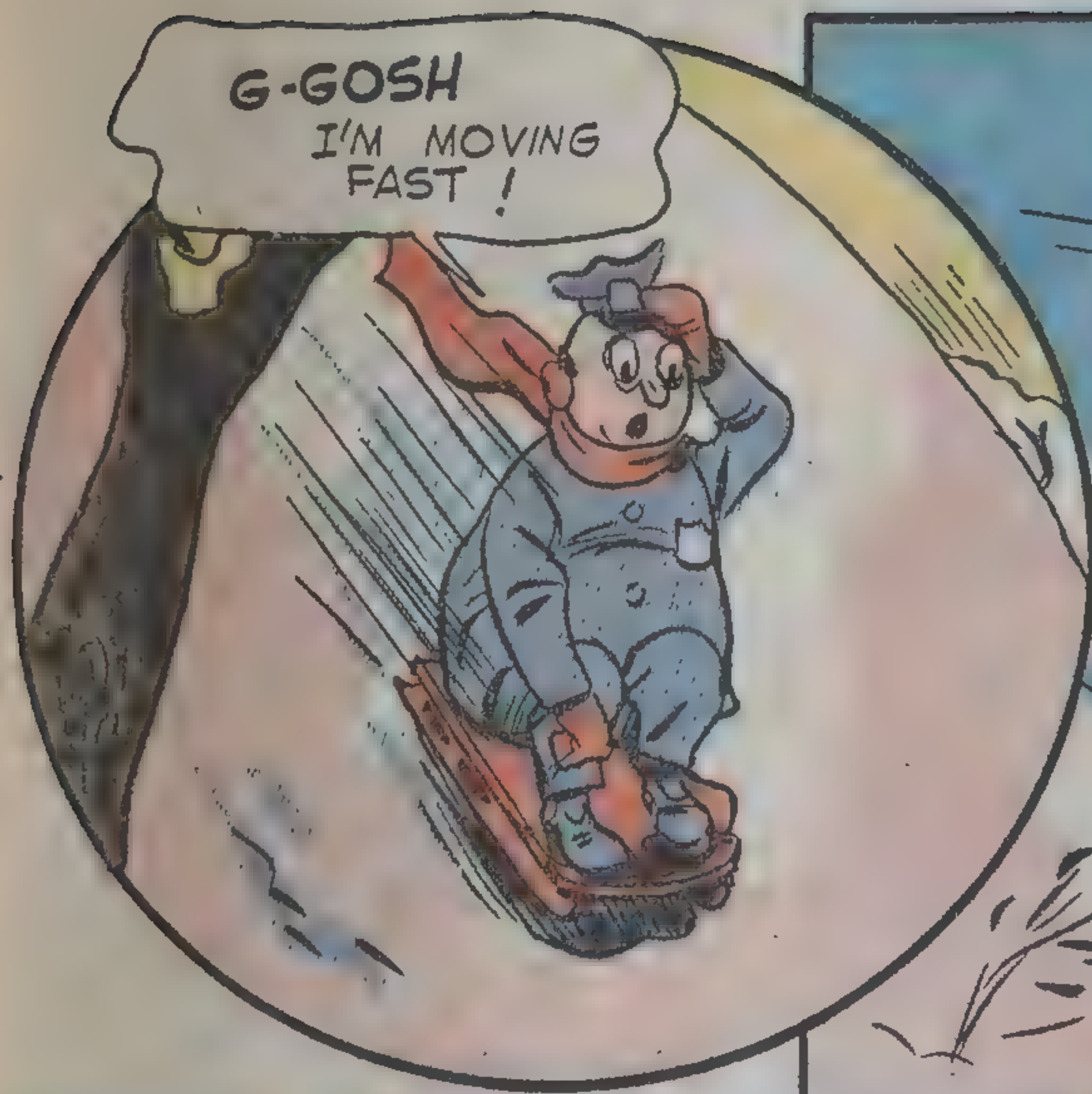
LET'S GO CHANGE OUR CLOTHES. I KNOW OF A SWELL CHOP SUEY PLACE, AND THERE'S A CERTAIN MOVIE -

HONORABLE ANCESTORS FORGIVE ME, I DO NOT LIKE CHINESE FOOD. I HAVE SOMETHING ELSE I WOULD LIKE TO DO. I HAVE HEARD ONE CAN BUY THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE!



The CRIMSON AVENGER appears every month in DETECTIVE COMICS





G-GOSH
I'M MOVING
FAST !



HELP!



HEY-LOOK OUT!
I'M COMING FAST
AND CAN'T STOP!



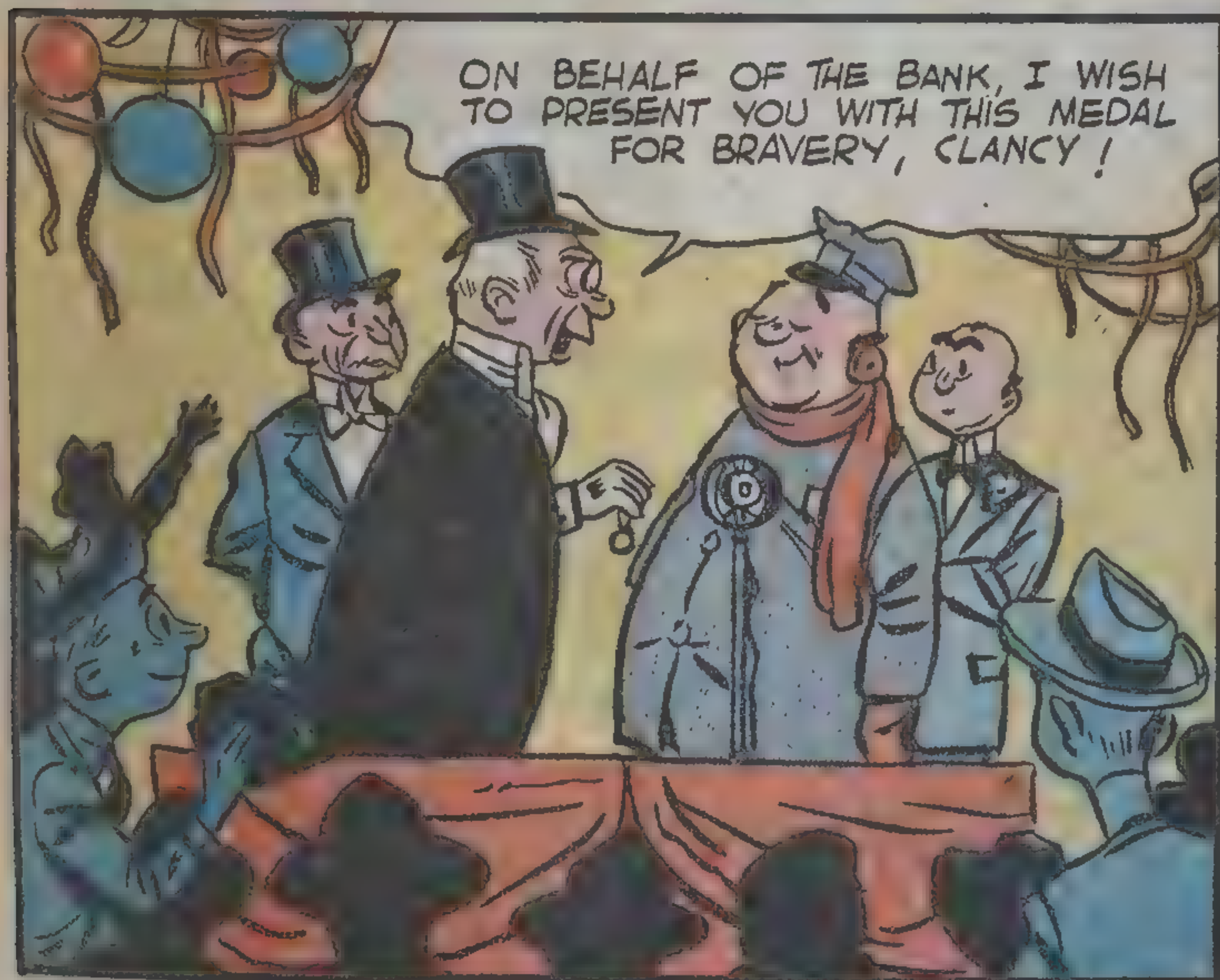
C'MON, SLUG-RUN
FAST - THEY'RE CLOSING
IN ON US !



SOCK



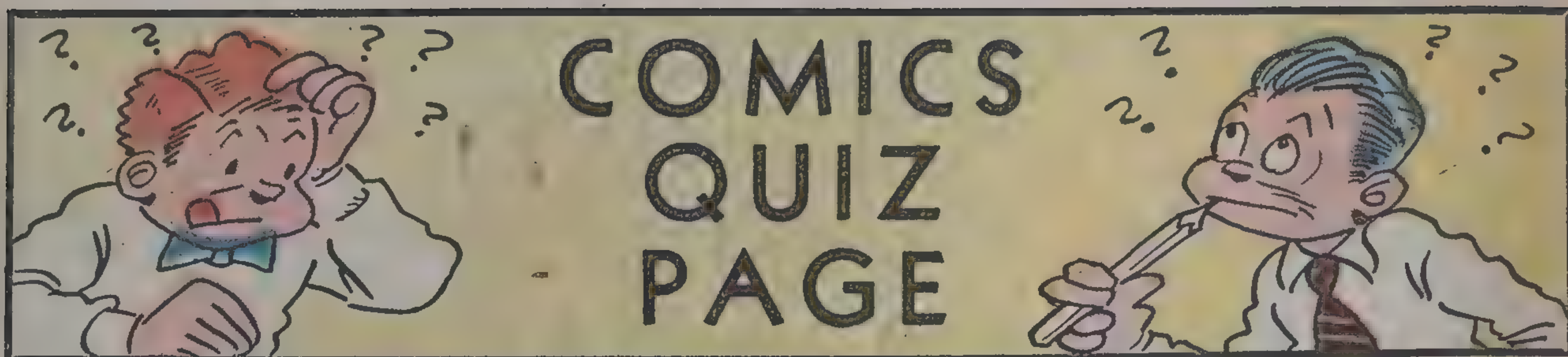
CONGRATULATIONS, CLANCY -
YOU'VE CAPTURED A BAND
OF DESPERATE BANK CROOKS
SINGLEHANDED !



ON BEHALF OF THE BANK, I WISH
TO PRESENT YOU WITH THIS MEDAL
FOR BRAVERY, CLANCY !



I'LL KEEP THIS SLED AROUND
NOW. YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN
I MAY NEED IT !



TIME out, comics fans, before you turn the page to follow the thrilling trail of the **SHINING KNIGHT** as he gives battle to the **HAND**'s grim emissary. With this first issue of **LEADING COMICS** we introduce a brand-new fun-feature—a quiz designed to test **YOUR** knowledge of your five favorite features! How well do you know your heroes? Quiz yourself on the following questions and find out! The answers are printed upside down on the lower part of this page.

TRUE OR FALSE

1. Victory is the battle-cry of the **SHINING KNIGHT**.
2. In real life, the **VIGILANTE** is known as the "Prairie Troubadour".
3. **THE CRIMSON AVENGER**'s aide is called **WING**, because he rides a winged horse.
4. The vehicle used by the **GREEN ARROW** and **SPEEDY** is known as the **ARROWPLANE**.
5. The **STAR ROCKET-RACER** is a combination automobile, autogiro and airplane.

FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. The.....battles public enemies with western weapons.
2. The color of the **SHINING KNIGHT**'s steed is.....
3. The **STAR-SPANGLED KID** andare a famous team.
4. A sword that can cut through steel is owned by
5. A special catapult that can hurl passengers into the air is a feature of the vehicle known as the.....

WHO'S WHO?

1. Who is **Greg Sanders**?
2. What millionaire's son gives orders to **Pat Dugan**, the chauffeur?
3. Who wears golden armor that bullets cannot penetrate?
4. What champion of justice wears a scarlet costume?
5. What famous character wears a green feather in his cap?

HEROES AND VILLAINS

Can You Match These Pairs Correctly?

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. THE GREEN ARROW | BIG CAESAR |
| 2. THE CRIMSON AVENGER | THE RED DRAGON |
| 3. THE STAR-SPANGLED KID | THE DUMMY |
| 4. THE SHINING KNIGHT | THE NEEDLE |
| 5. THE VIGILANTE | PROFESSOR MERLIN |

FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. False. Victory is the name of the **SHINING KNIGHT**'s horse.
2. True.
3. False. The **SHINING KNIGHT** rides a winged horse.
4. True.
5. True.

TRUE OR FALSE

HEROES AND VILLAINS

1. **Greg Sanders** is the real name of the **VIGILANTE**.
2. **Sylvester Pemberton**, the **STAR-SPANGLED KID**.
3. **THE SHINING KNIGHT**.
4. **THE CRIMSON AVENGER**.
5. **SPEEDY**.

WHO'S WHO?

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

The SHINING KNIGHT



NOW FOR A QUICK JOURNEY TO THE LITTLE KNOWN FOREST VALLEY OF WAMONA, WHERE THE **RED DRAGON**, HORRIBLE HENCHMAN OF THE HAND, PRACTISES BRUTAL INJUSTICE FOR THE SAKE OF PROFIT--- AND AGAINST WHOSE EVIL STRENGTH IS AGAIN PITTED THE VALOR AND BATTLE-SKILL OF THE SHINING KNIGHT!

ONE OF THE HAND'S HUGE AIR-LINERS SWOOPS DOWN OVER THE UNKNOWN NORTHERN EDEN OF WAMONA VALLEY...

THERE, MEN... OUR OBJECTIVE IS IN SIGHT!



AT THE CONTROLS OF THE PLANE IS THAT CRIME GENIUS WHOSE HORRIBLE FACE MUST BE KEPT MASKED...THE **RED DRAGON**...

I DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD ANY LOOT LOCATED HERE, BOSS.

I KNOW NOTHING MORE THAN YOURSELF, BROM., BUT, THE HAND KNOWS! HIS DIRECTIONS ARE EXACT AND COMPLETE! I ASK NO QUESTIONS...YOU FOLLOW MY EXAMPLE!



SEE, A MIGHTY FLYING THING, GREATER THAN ANY EAGLE... CAN IT BE THE FULFILLMENT OF ANCIENT PROPHECY...THE COMING OF THE **WENDIGO**?



THE MEMBERS OF THE WAMONA TRIBE...SIMPLE, GENTLE INDIANS WHO ARE BARELY KNOWN TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD OF CIVILIZATION WATCH IN AWE AS THE MIGHTY PLANE DESCENDS...

THE PLANE LANDS ON FLAT
GROUND NEAR A
BEAUTIFUL RIVER...

LOOK, BOSS...
THOSE
REDSKINS!

DON'T FEAR
IGNORANT SAVAGES,
BROM!

HAIL, STRANGERS!
I AM CHIEF OF
WAMONA! DO
YOU COME IN PEACE?

WITHOUT SPEAKING, THE
RED DRAGON FIRES WITH
DEADLY AIM!



HE KILLED OUR CHIEF
WITHOUT REASON OR
WARNING! **ATTACK!**

NO! DO YOU NOT
REMEMBER THE
PROPHECY? **THE
WENDIGO
HAS COME!**

IT HAS BEEN FORETOLD THAT
A MIGHTY STRANGER WOULD
DESCEND ON WINGS FROM
HEAVEN... OVERTHROW THE
RULER OF THE VALLEY... MAKE
OUR PEOPLE GREAT AND RICH!
SEE... THE STORY IS COMING TRUE!



GREAT WENDIGO,
WE ARE YOURS
TO COMMAND!

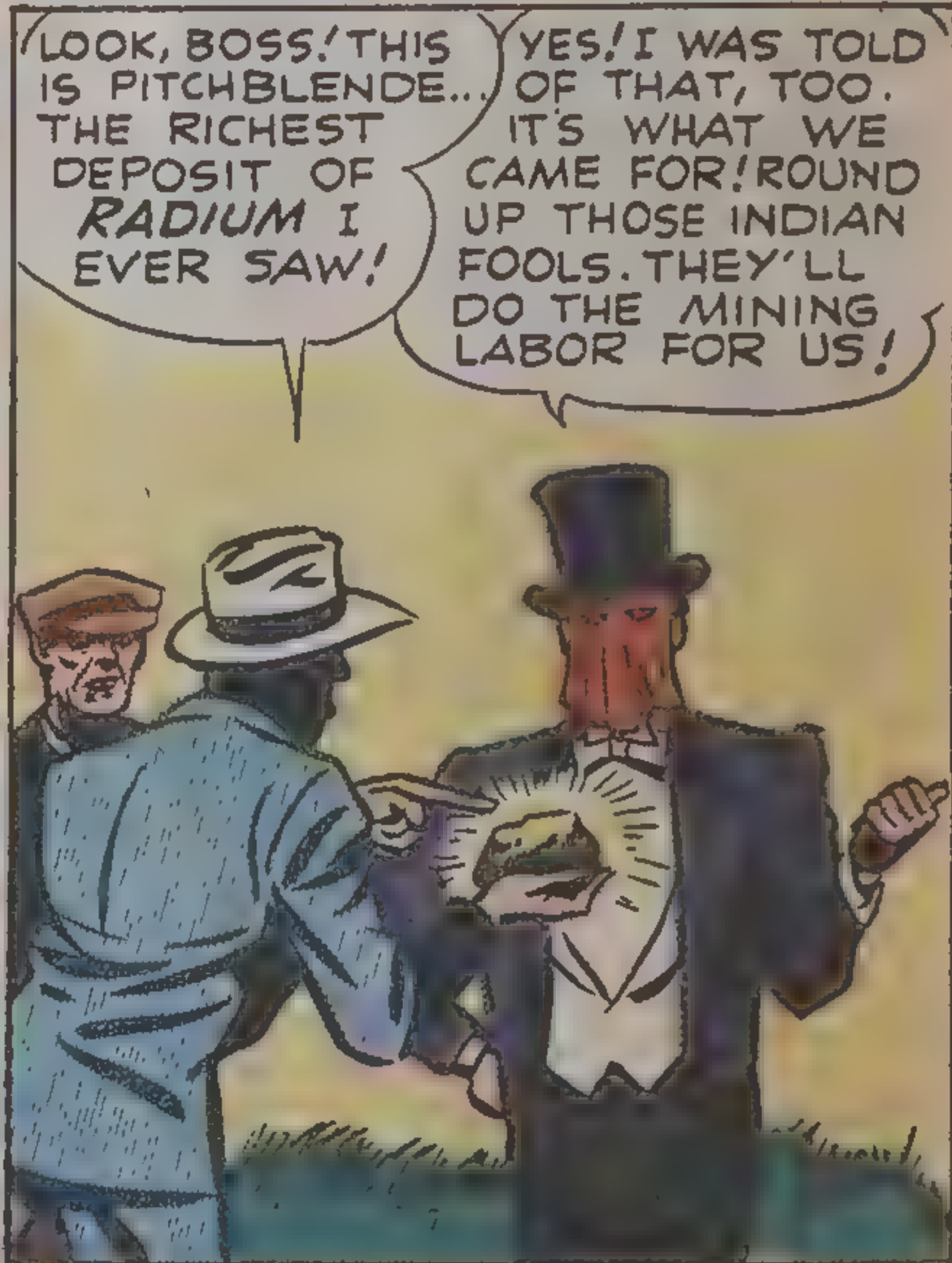
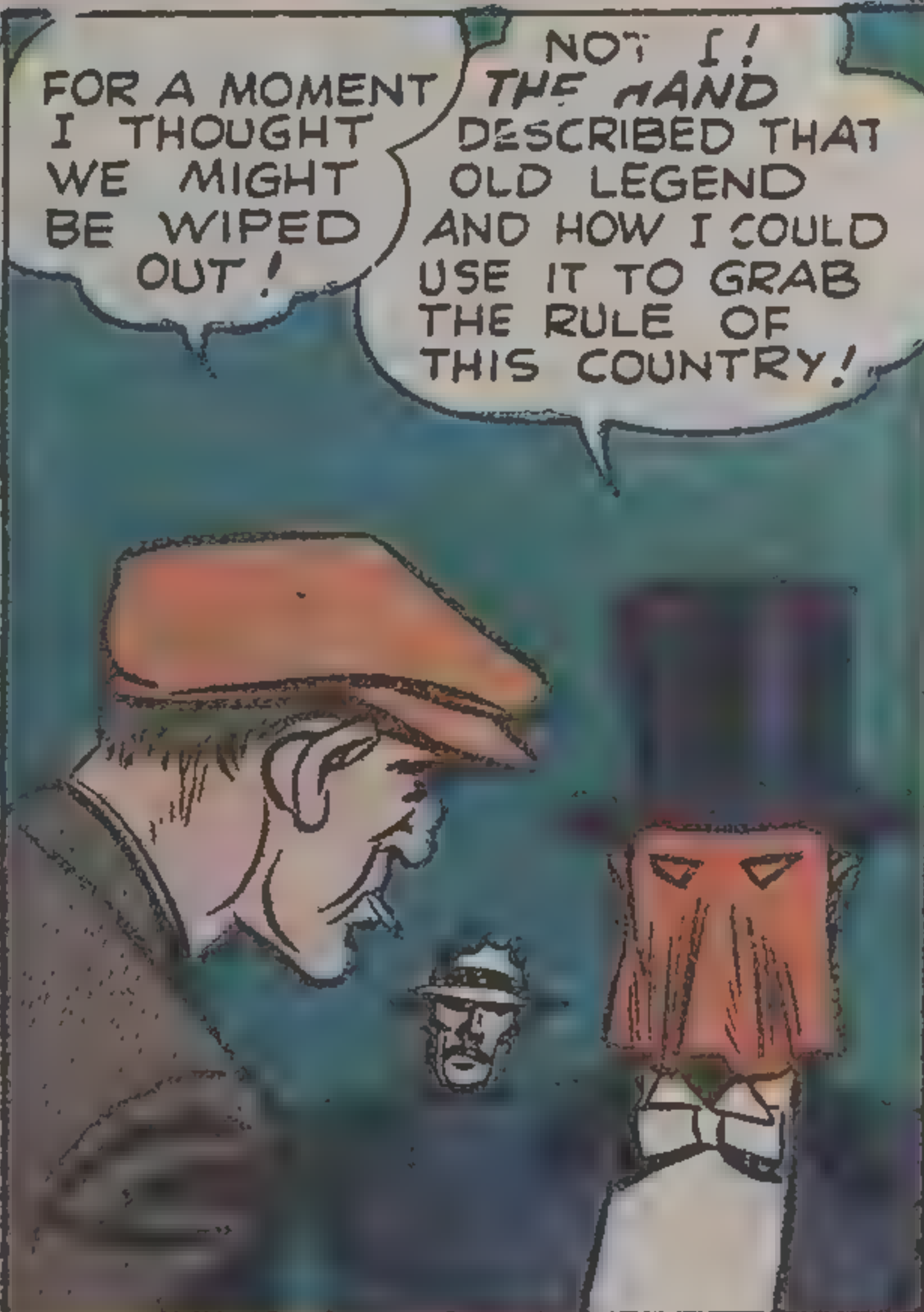
YOU ARE WISE!
OBEY ME OR
MORE INDIANS
WILL TASTE
DEATH!

FOR A MOMENT
I THOUGHT
WE MIGHT
BE WIPED
OUT!

NOT I!
THE HAND
DESCRIBED THAT
OLD LEGEND
AND HOW I COULD
USE IT TO GRAB
THE RULE OF
THIS COUNTRY!

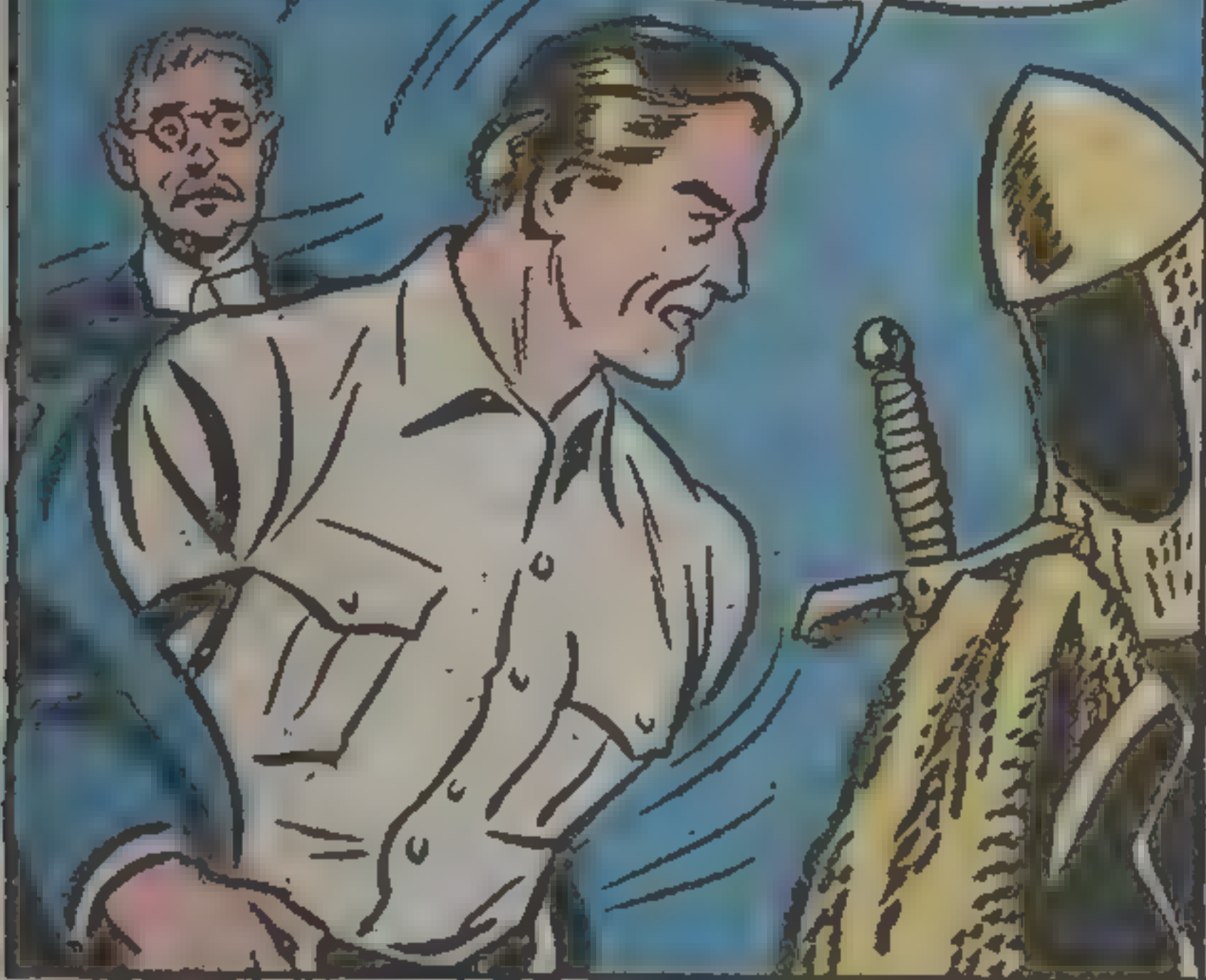
LOOK, BOSS! THIS
IS PITCHBLende...
THE RICHEST
DEPOSIT OF
RADIUM I
EVER SAW!

YES! I WAS TOLD
OF THAT, TOO.
IT'S WHAT WE
CAME FOR! ROUND
UP THOSE INDIAN
FOOLS. THEY'LL
DO THE MINING
LABOR FOR US!



AND NOW THE SCENE SHIFTS TO A BACK CORRIDOR OF A GREAT MUSEUM, WHERE THE QUIET CARETAKER PREPARES FOR AN AMAZING CHANGE IN APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER...

JUSTIN, MY BOY, IS THE SHINING KNIGHT GOING TO RIDE AGAIN? YES, DR. MORESBY... FOR THE RED DRAGON IS ROARING, FAR TO THE NORTH!



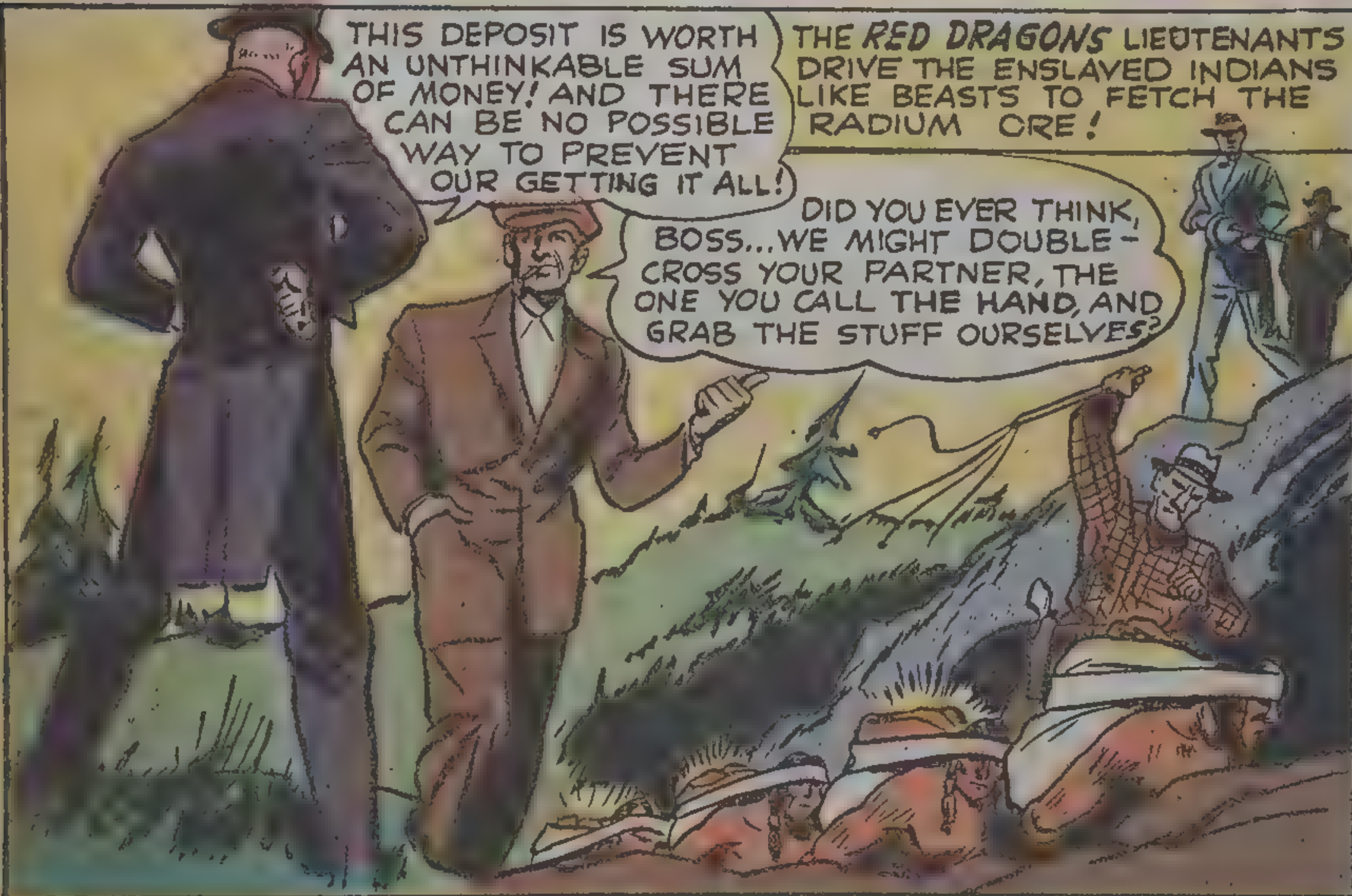
HE IS NOW SIR JUSTIN, CLAD IN MAGIC ARMOR, ARMED WITH THE SWORD AND LANCE OF THE WIZARD MERLIN... THE SHINING KNIGHT, FLOWER OF CHIVALRY...



BY MY TROTH, 'T WILL BE A JOYSOME JOUST! LET HIS HEART BE HOT AND HIS ARM STRONG... FOR I LOVE A FEARSOME FIGHT!



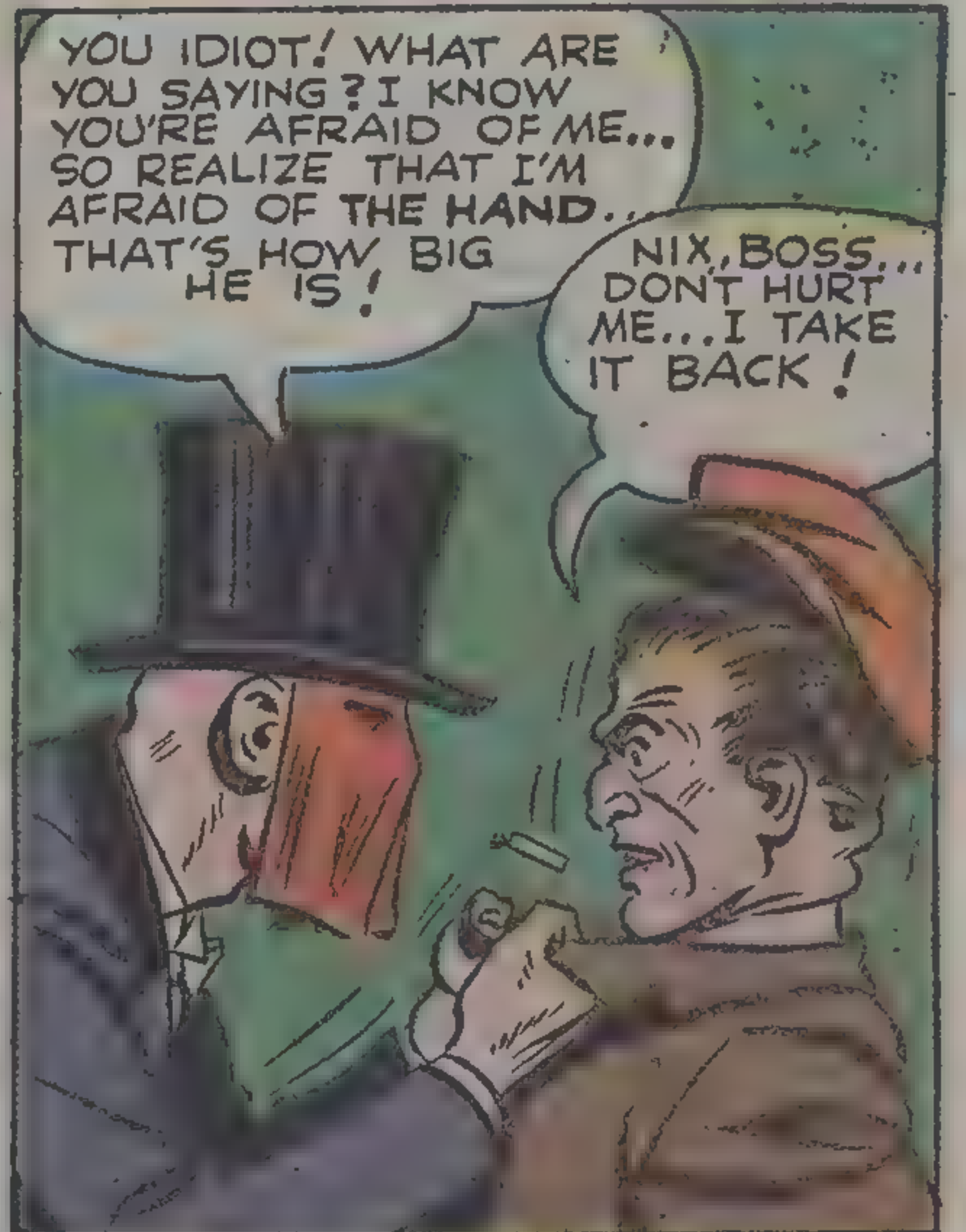
FASTER, WINGED VICTORY! NORTHWARD... EVER NORTHWARD!



THIS DEPOSIT IS WORTH AN UNTHINKABLE SUM OF MONEY! AND THERE CAN BE NO POSSIBLE WAY TO PREVENT OUR GETTING IT ALL!

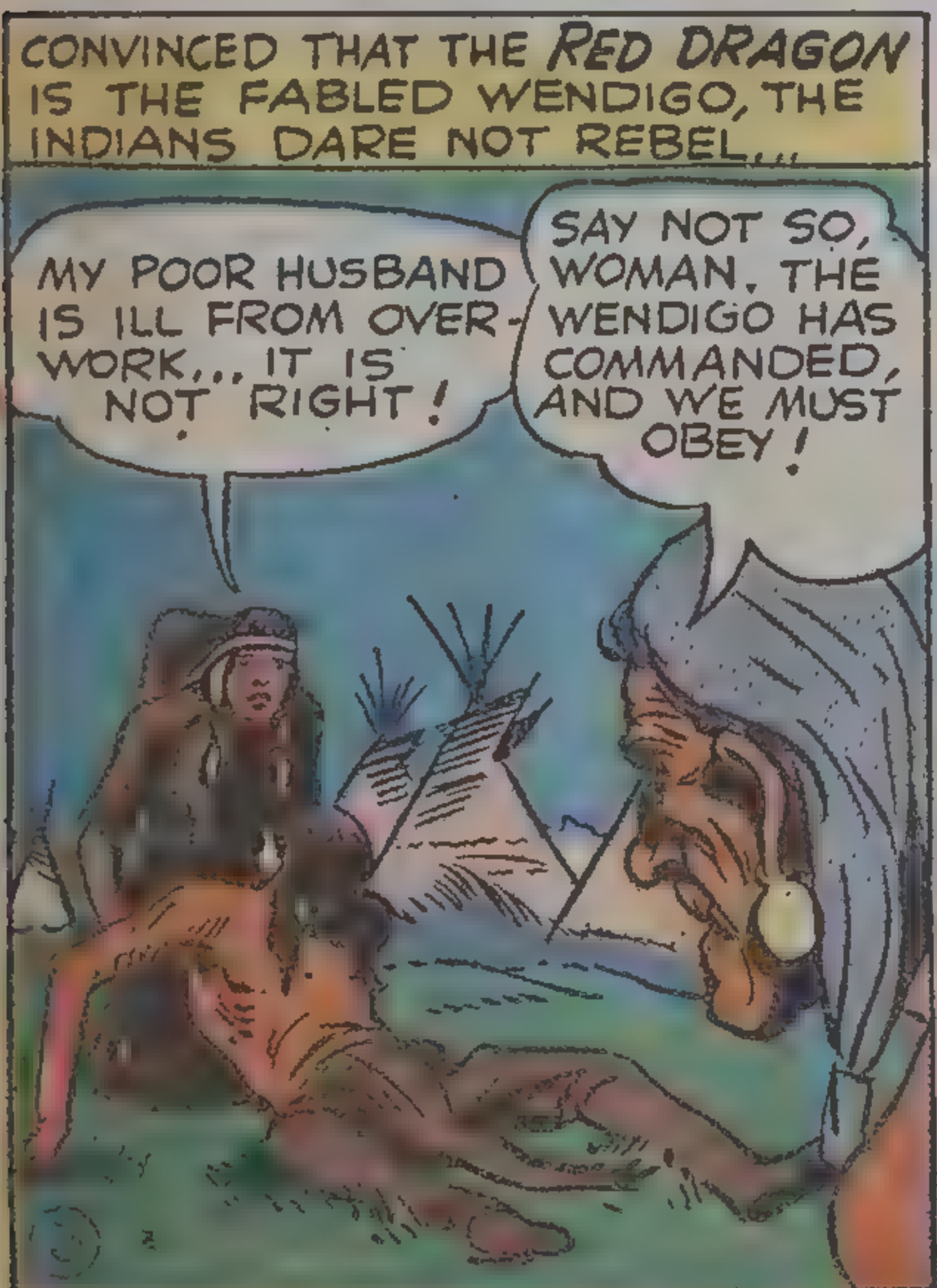
THE RED DRAGONS LIEUTENANTS DRIVE THE ENSLAVED INDIANS LIKE BEASTS TO FETCH THE RADIUM ORE!

DID YOU EVER THINK, BOSS... WE MIGHT DOUBLE-CROSS YOUR PARTNER, THE ONE YOU CALL THE HAND, AND GRAB THE STUFF OURSELVES?



YOU IDIOT! WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? I KNOW YOU'RE AFRAID OF ME... SO REALIZE THAT I'M AFRAID OF THE HAND... THAT'S HOW BIG HE IS!

NIX, BOSS... DON'T HURT ME... I TAKE IT BACK!



CONVINCED THAT THE RED DRAGON IS THE FABLED WENDIGO, THE INDIANS DARE NOT REBEL...

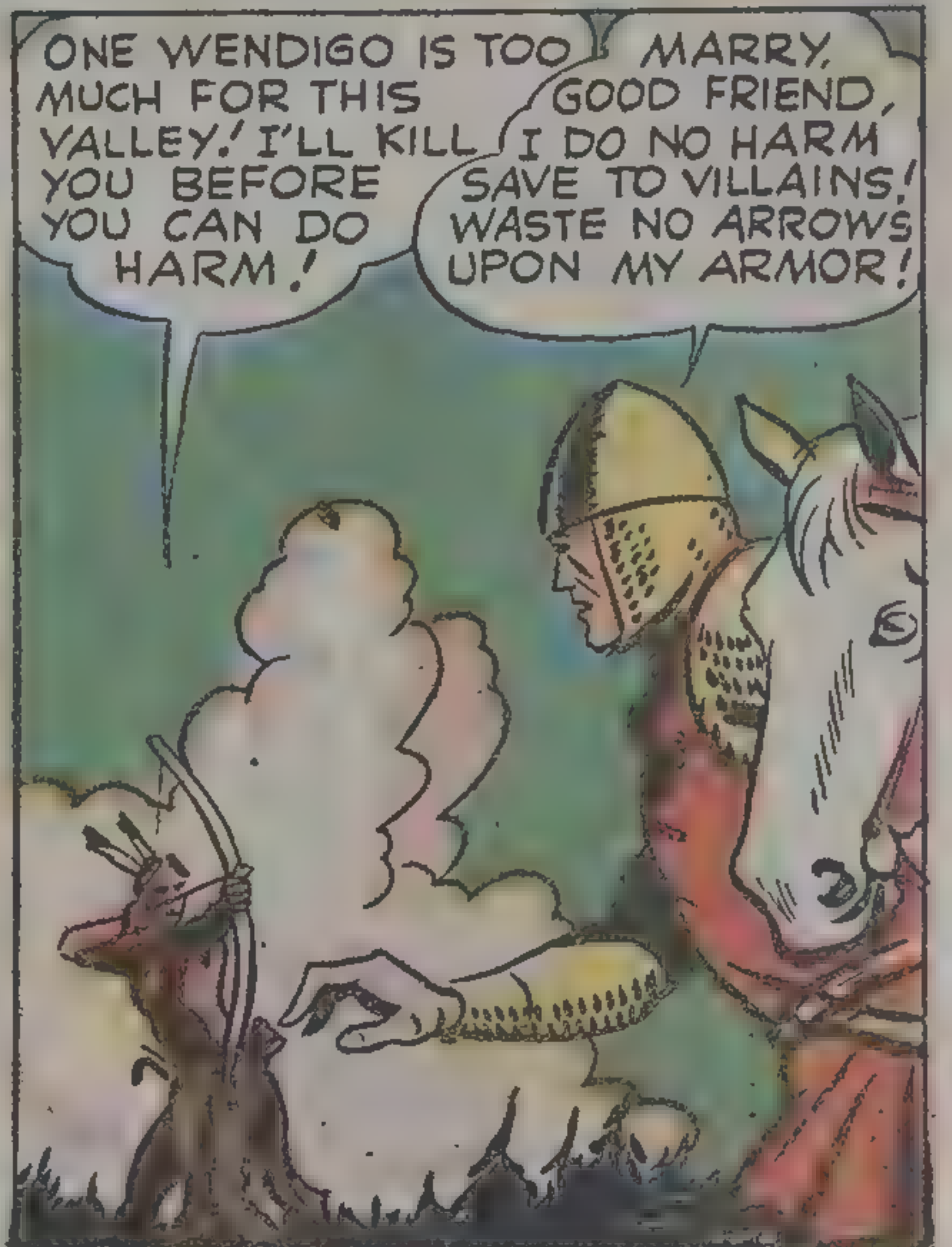
MY POOR HUSBAND IS ILL FROM OVERWORK... IT IS NOT RIGHT!

SAY NOT SO, WOMAN. THE WENDIGO HAS COMMANDED, AND WE MUST OBEY!



ONLY ONE MAN DARES RESIST... THE BRAVE, YOUNG WARRIOR KOMAH, WHO HAS FLED FROM HIS MISERABLE TRIBE...

WHAT IS THIS? ANOTHER OF THESE LYING, STEALING WENDIGO THINGS? I'LL KILL HIM!



ONE WENDIGO IS TOO MUCH FOR THIS VALLEY! I'LL KILL YOU BEFORE YOU CAN DO HARM!

MARRY, GOOD FRIEND, I DO NO HARM TO VILLAINS! WASTE NO ARROWS UPON MY ARMOR!



SEE, LAD, HOW FEEBLE IS YOUR BOW! MY MAIL IS NOT EVEN SCRATCHED!

FOUL INVADER, I HAVE OTHER WEAPONS!

ZING



ZOUNDS! 'TIS A GALLANT MAN-AT-ARMS AND ONE I WOULD GO FAR TO MEET!

I'LL SPLIT YOU TO THE CHIN, WENDIGO!

BUT THE MAGIC ARMOR WITHSTANDS THE POWERFUL BLOW...



YOUR STRENGTH IS AS NAUGHT, POOR SAVAGE! AND NOW TO END THE PLAY!

CLANG

A SNAP OF THE SWORD OF SHARPNESS... THE TOUGH HANDLE OF THE WAR AXE IS SEVERED LIKE A BLADE OF GRASS.



CLIP

YOUR WEAPONS ARE MAGIC. I AM BUT HUMAN! KILL ME, WENDIGO!

I HAVE NO DESIRE TO KILL YOU, BRAVE YOUTH! AND WHAT IS A WENDIGO?



KOMAH THEN TELLS THE SHINING KNIGHT OF THE SAD EVENTS IN WAMONA VALLEY.

-AND SO THE PROPHECY CAME TRUE, EXCEPT THAT THIS WENDIGO DID NOT MAKE MY PEOPLE GREAT! HE ONLY EN-SLAVED THEM!

A SAD MISTAKE, KOMAH! THE VARLET WHO COZENED YOU IS THE RED DRAGON... FOUL OF FACE, BUT ONLY A COMMON MAN, EVEN AS YOU AND I, AND I HAVE COME HITHER TO OVERTHROW HIM!

BIDE WHILE I TETHER MY GOOD STEED... THEN LEAD ME TO THE STRONGHOLD OF THE EVIL!

YOU ARE A TRUE MAN, AND I AM SORRY I ATTACKED YOU! PERHAPS WE TWO CAN DO SOMETHING!



FASTER, YOU LAZY RED RATS! OR SHALL I WARM YOU UP WITH THIS WHIP?

YOU SEE, FRIEND, WHAT HAPPENS?

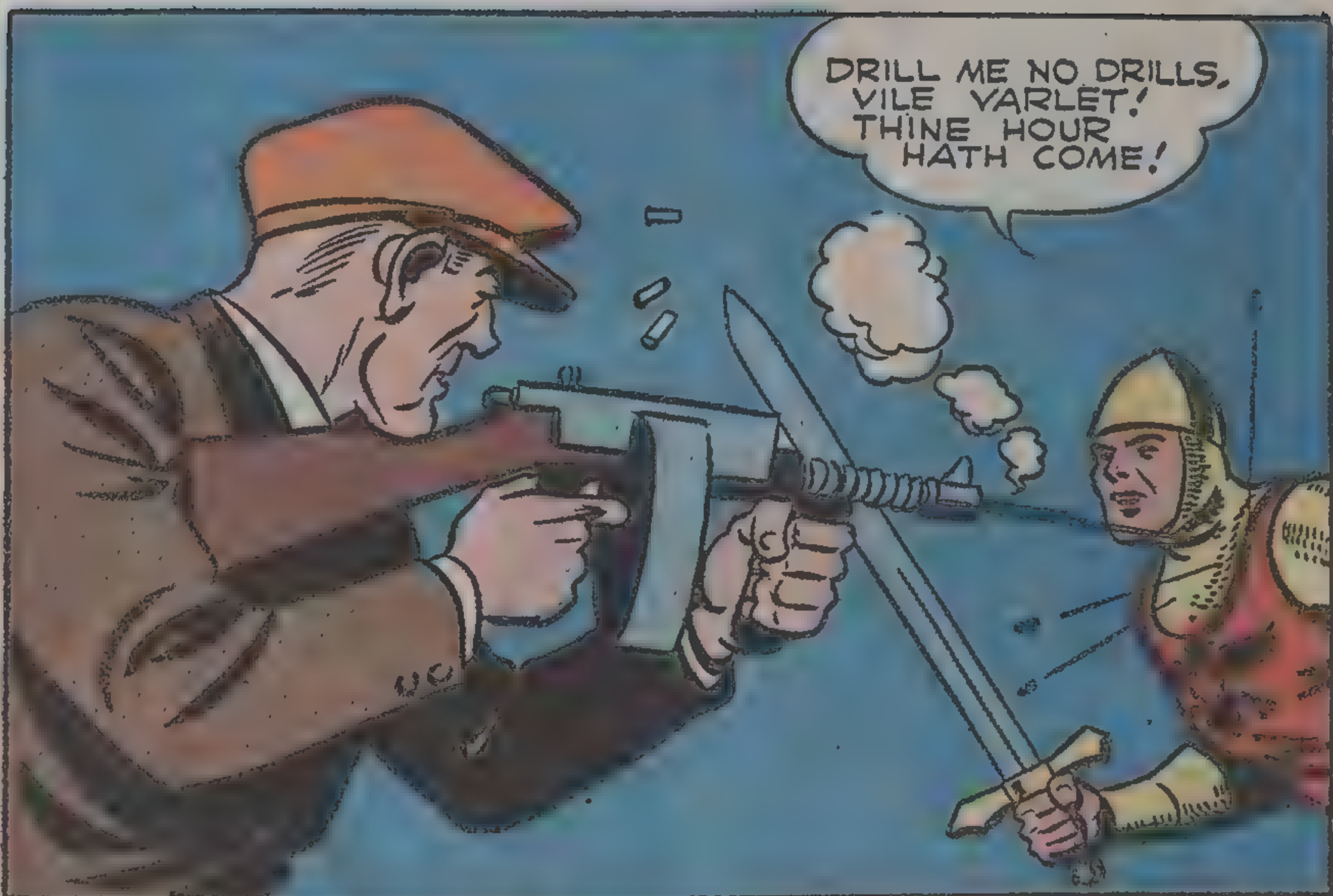
I SEE AND IT SHALL HAPPEN NO LONGER!





STAND, SCOUNDREL, I DON'T KNOW AND FREE THOSE SLAVES, YOU, BUDDY, BUT YOU SOUND LIKE A RIVAL RACKET TO ME...DROP THAT STABBING IRON BEFORE I DRILL YOU!

I'LL GORE YOU!



DRILL ME NO DRILLS, VILE VARLET! THINE HOUR HATH COME!



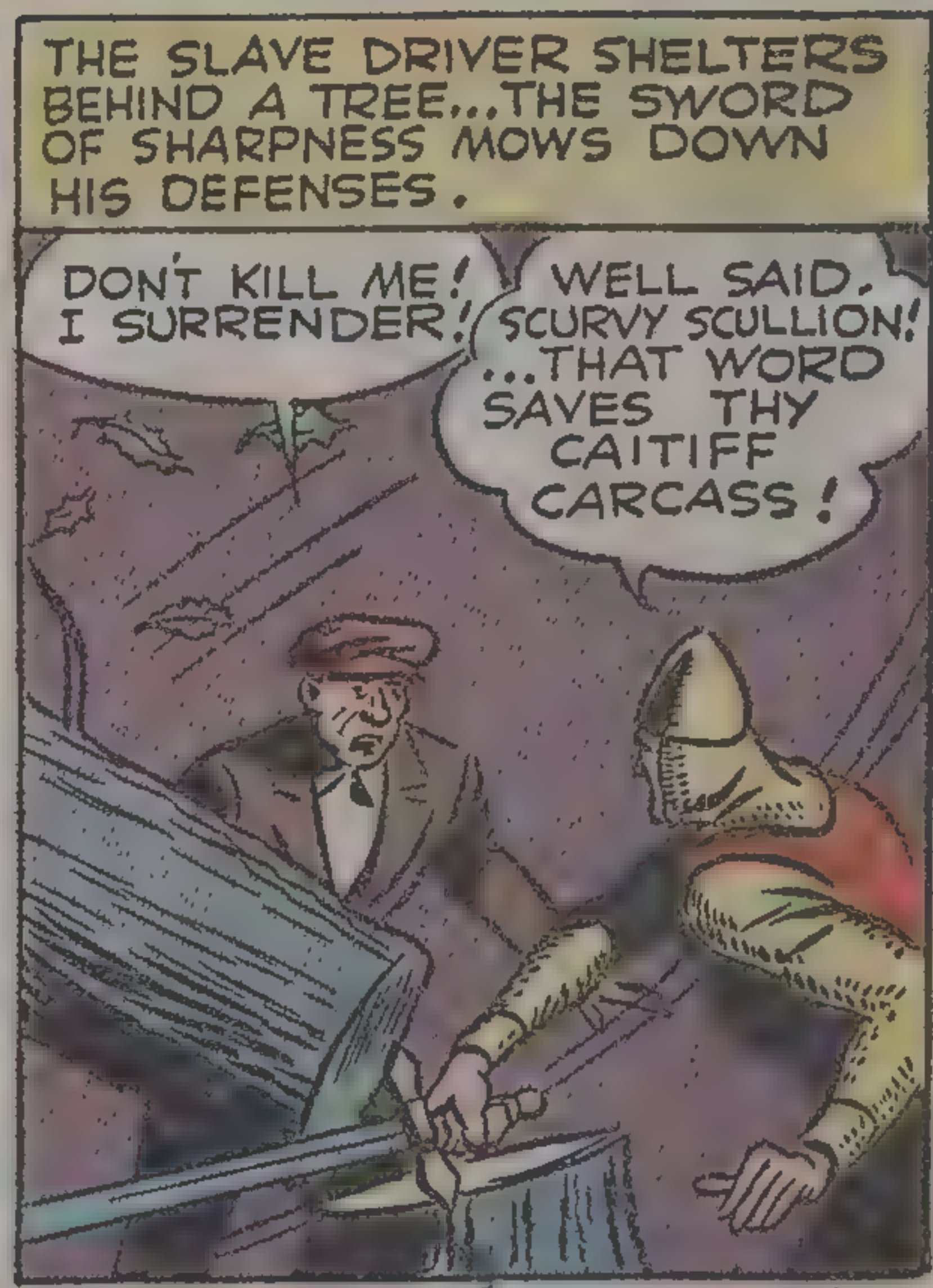
I'LL KILL YOU!

WITH THIS FEEBLE MISSILE? LOOK WELL HOW EASILY I SLICE IT IN TWAIN!



RUNNING SHALL HELP THEE NO MORE THAN THY SORRY BULLETS!

HELP! HELP!



THE SLAVE DRIVER SHELTERS BEHIND A TREE...THE SWORD OF SHARPNESS MOWS DOWN HIS DEFENSES.

DON'T KILL ME! I SURRENDER!

WELL SAID, SCURVY SCULLION! ...THAT WORD SAVES THY CAITIFF CARCASS!



DON'T! I'LL GO!

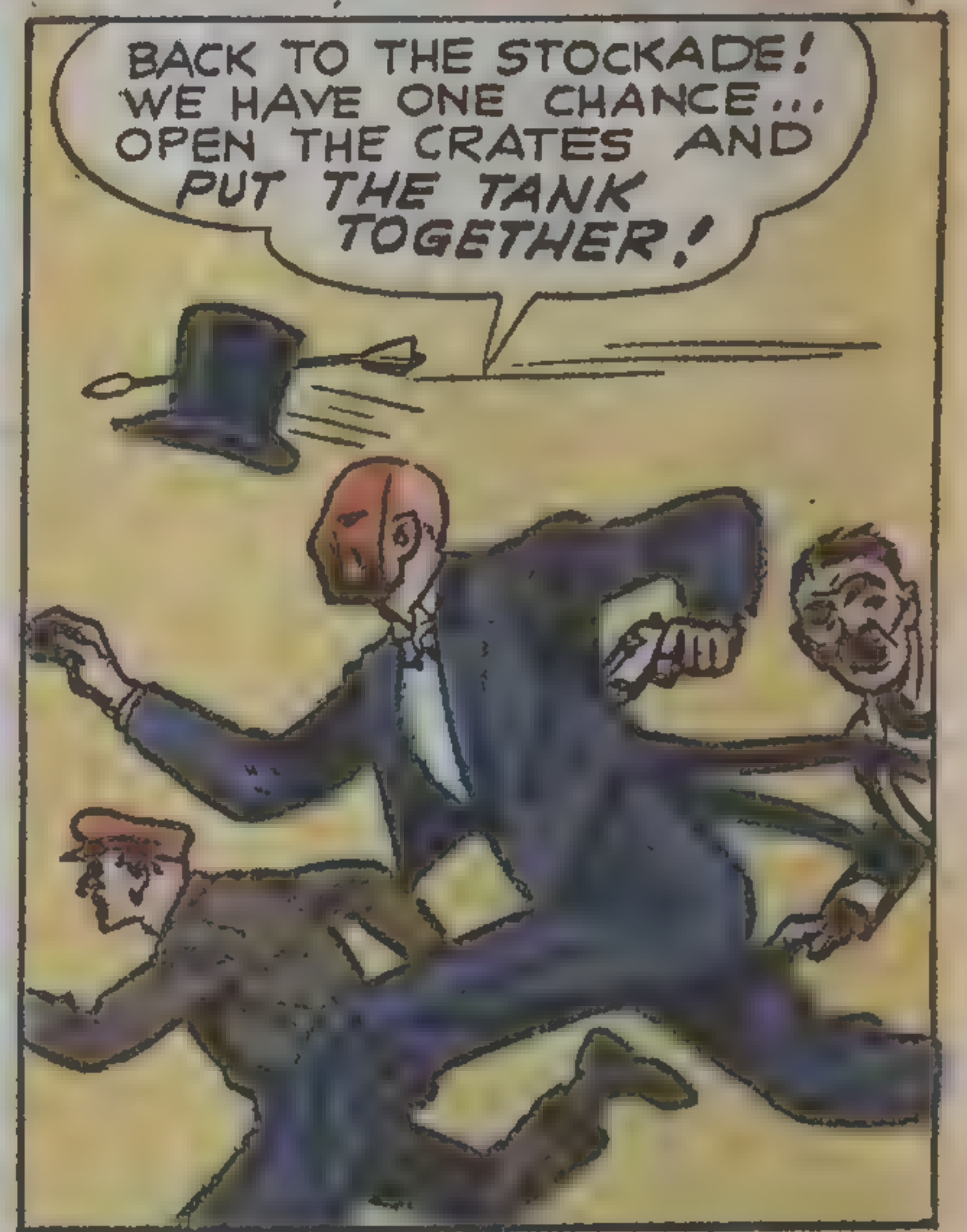
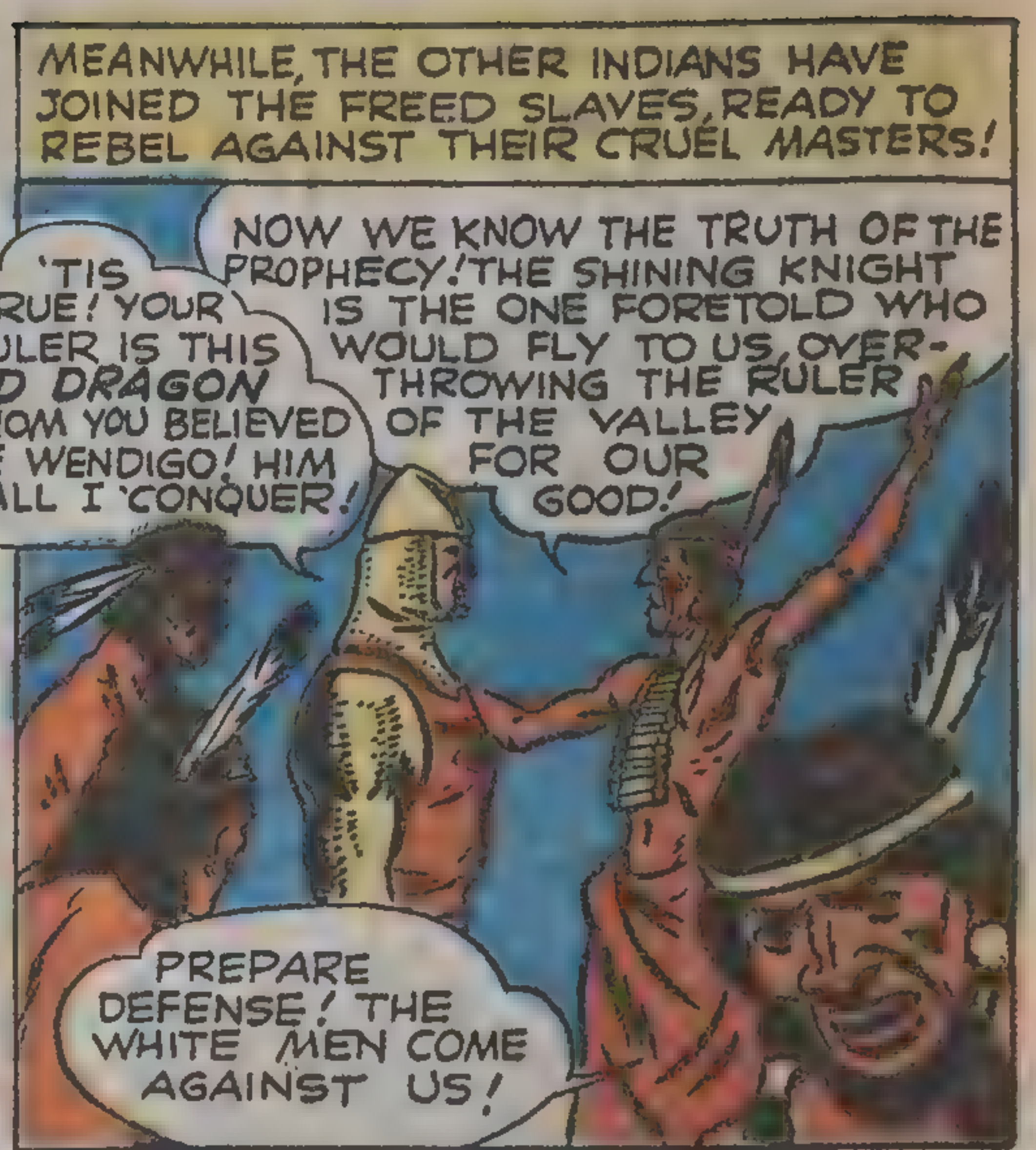
NOW BACK TO THY VILLAIN, MASTER... QUICKLY, LEST I SLAY!

THE GRATEFUL INDIANS WOULD GLADLY WORSHIP SIR JUSTIN, BUT ---

KNEEL NOT! I AM ONLY A MAN...COME TO SAVE YOU FROM YOUR SORROWS!

HE SPEAKS TRUTH! GET CLUBS, STONES...WE WILL OVERTHROW THAT INVADER WHO IS FALSELY CALLED THE WEN-DIGO!







OUR ARROWS ARE AS NOTHING! RETREAT! RETREAT!

YES, RETREAT— BUT ONLY A LITTLE WAY! I, TOO, HAVE A TRICK!



FALLING BACK, THE WAMONA WARRIORS HELP SIR JUSTIN IN A STRANGE WORK...

WHAT IS THIS NEW WONDER, GOLDEN LEADER?

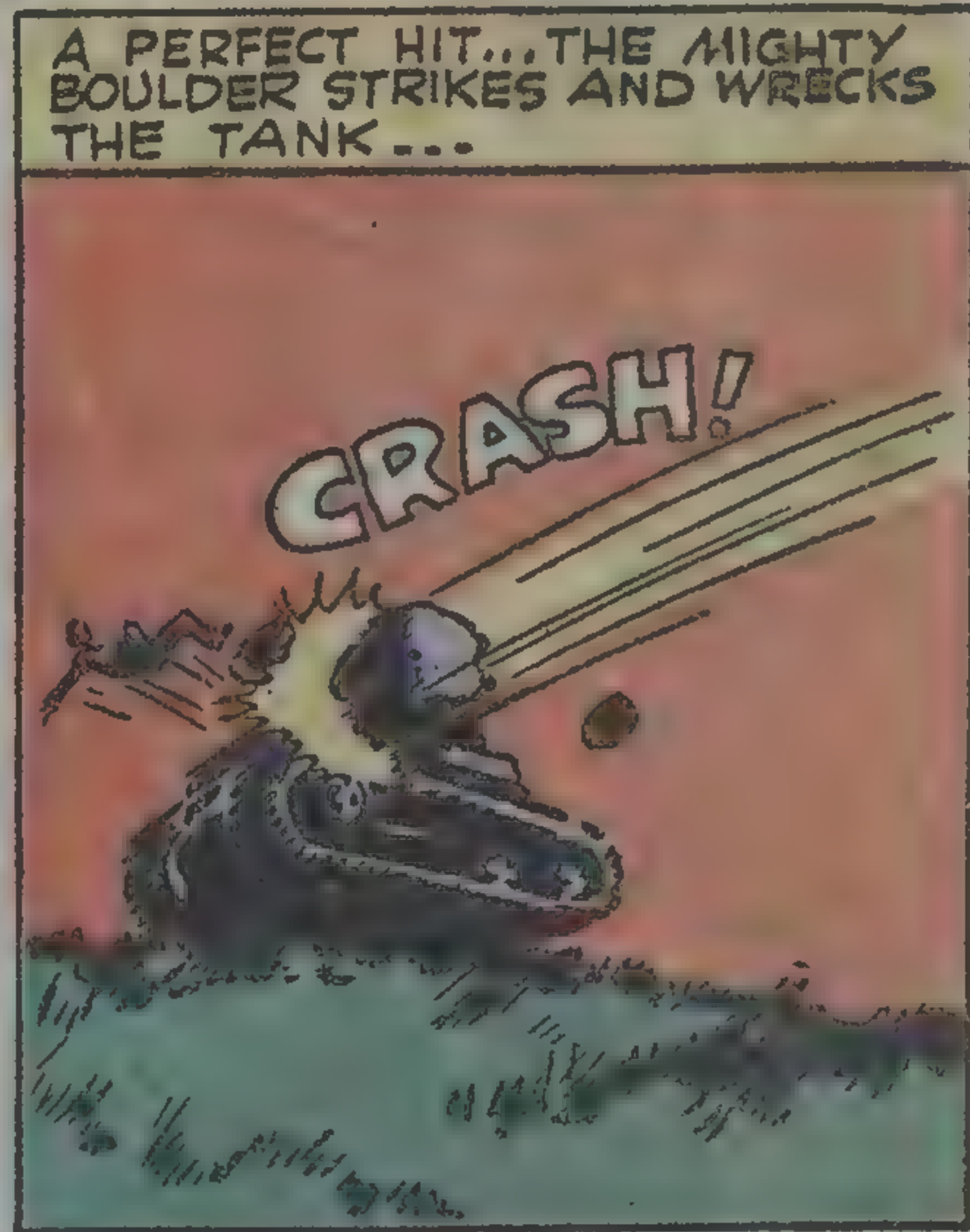
'TIS NOT NEW, BUT OLD EVEN IN KING ARTHUR'S DAY... A CATAPULT!



NOW SET THE STONE IN PLACE... SO! AND WAIT UNTIL THE RED DRAGON'S METAL MONSTER APPROACHETH, THEN...



LOOSE OUR ATTACK UPON THE VILLAINS!



A PERFECT HIT... THE MIGHTY BOULDER STRIKES AND WRECKS THE TANK...



SEE, THEY ARE VANQUISHED! CHARGE THEM!



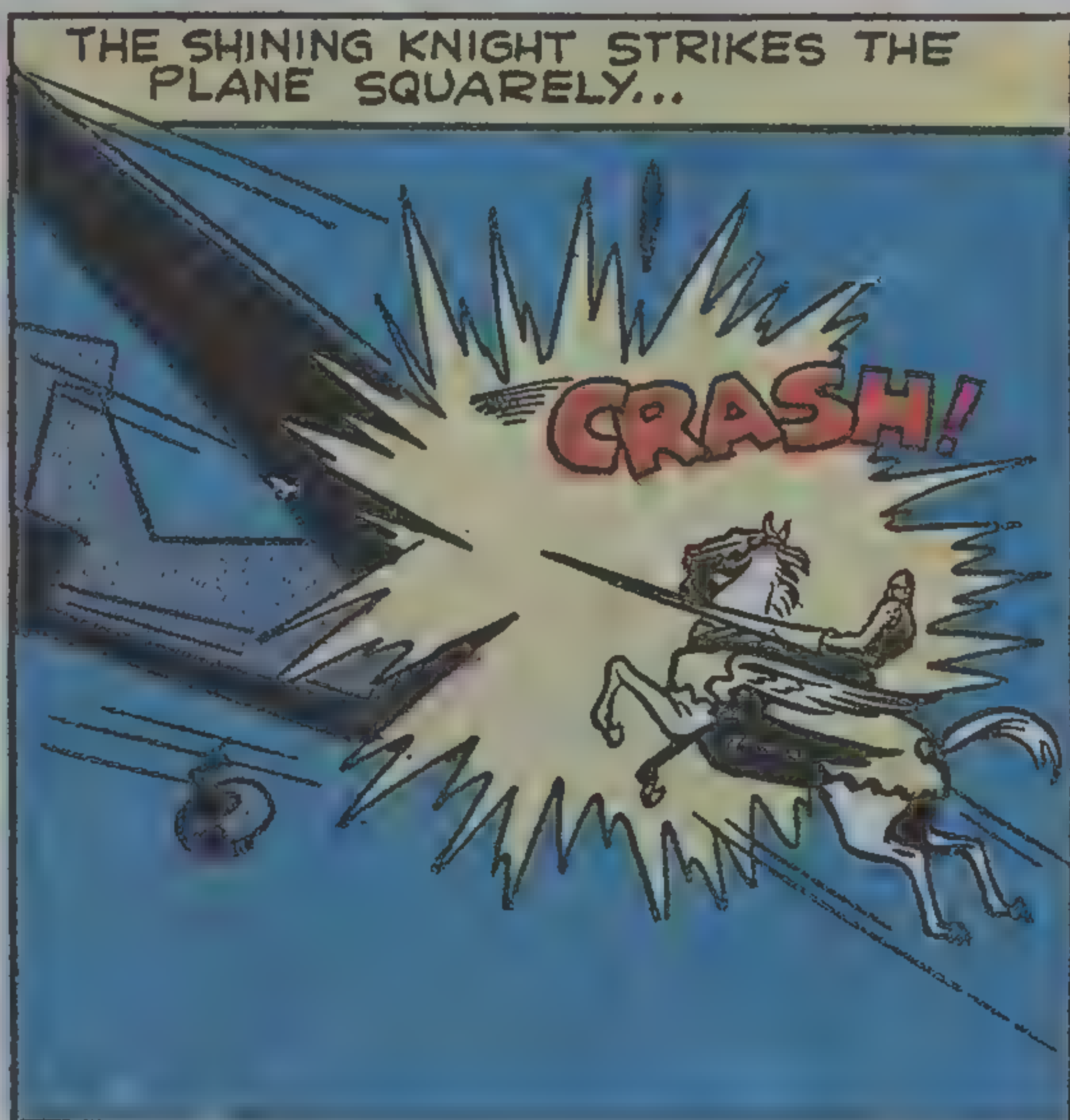
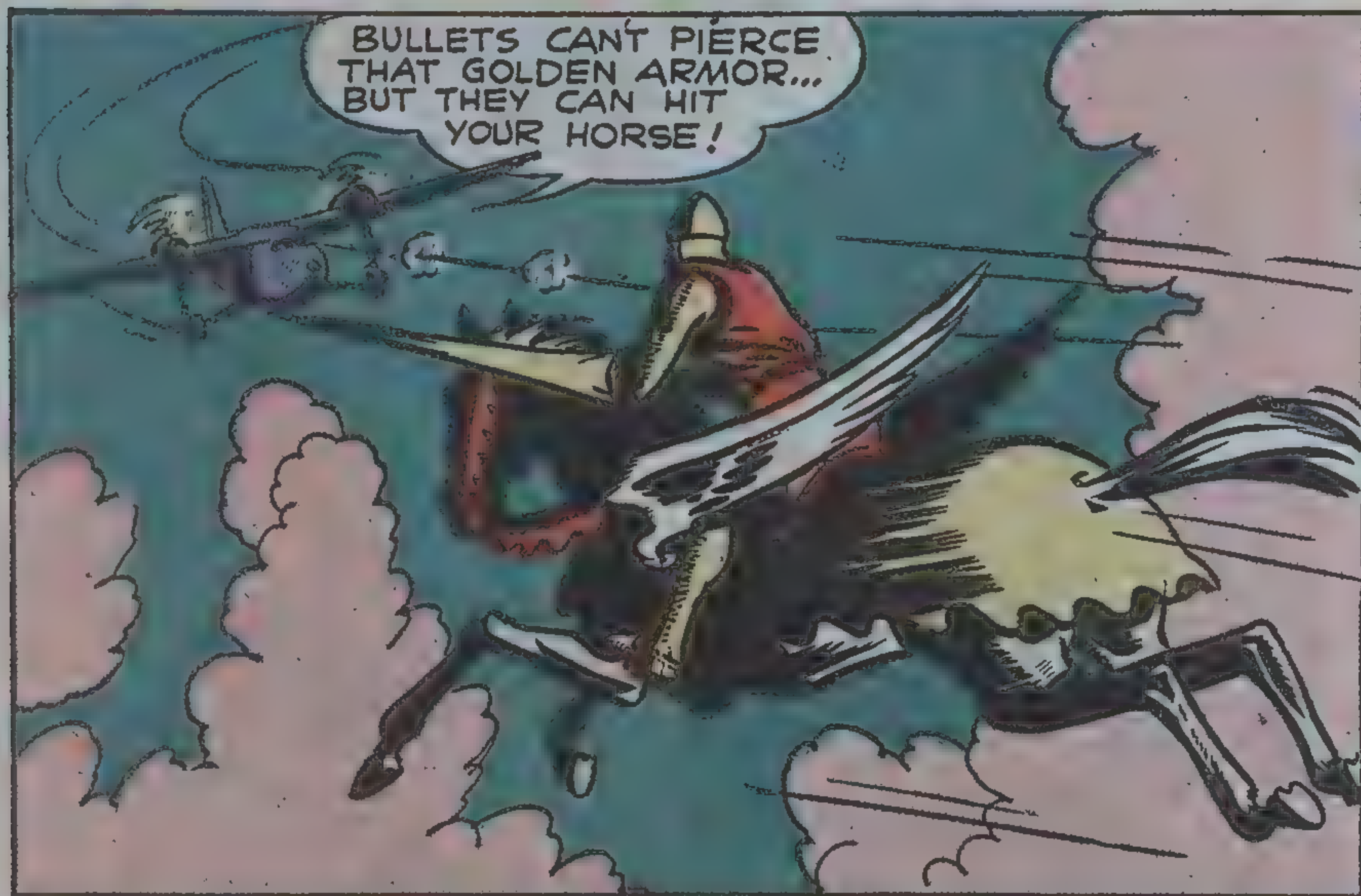
THEY CRESTFALLEN CRIMINALS EAGERLY CONFESS THEMSELVES CAPTIVES.

HOLD THOSE ARROWS!

WITHER WENT THE RED DRAGON?

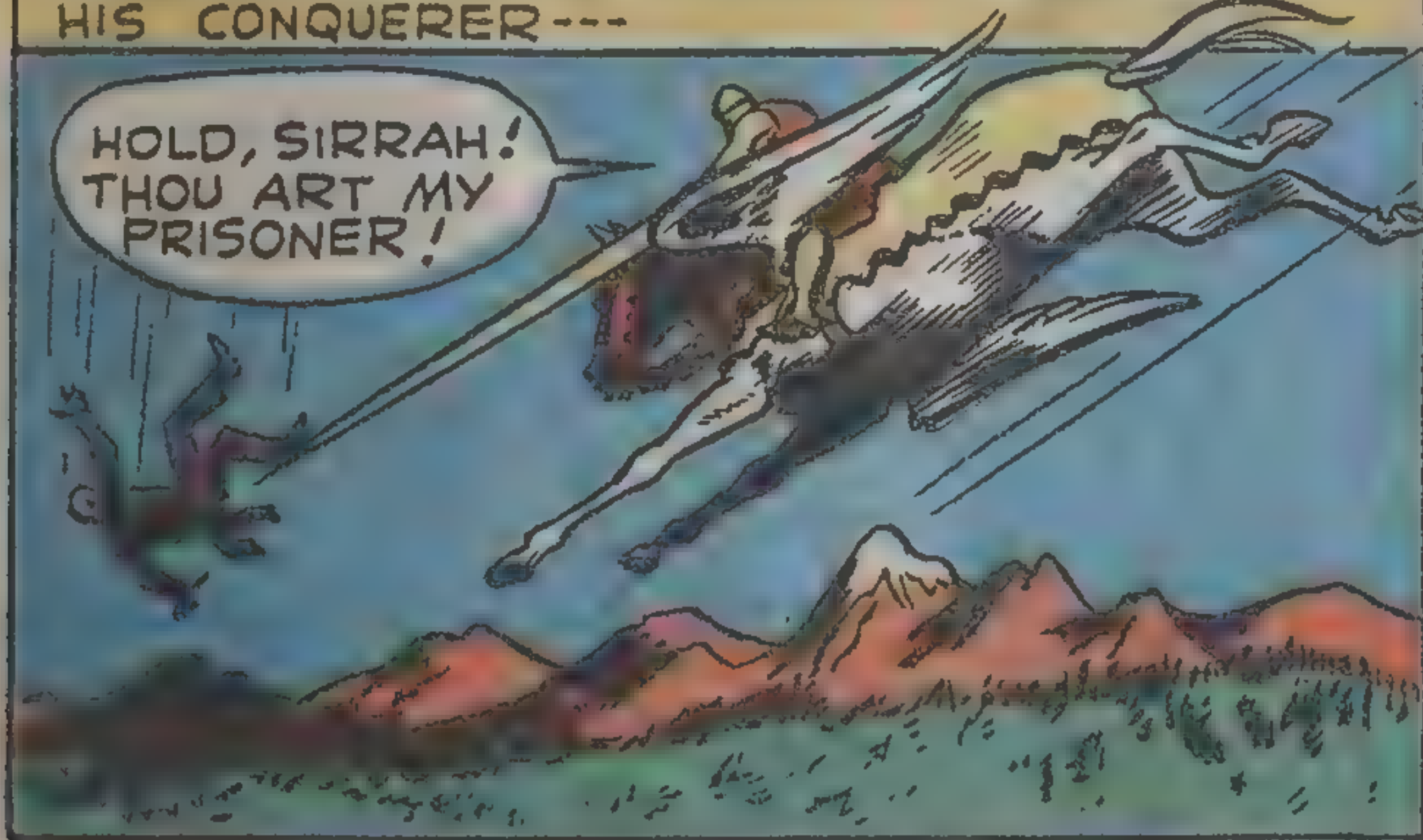


MY MEN ARE FINISHED! I'M GETTING OUT OF HERE—AND FAST!



THE RED DRAGON FALLS TOWARD A TERRIBLE DEATH! BUT AFTER HIM SPEEDS HIS CONQUERER---

HOLD, SIRRAH! THOU ART MY PRISONER!

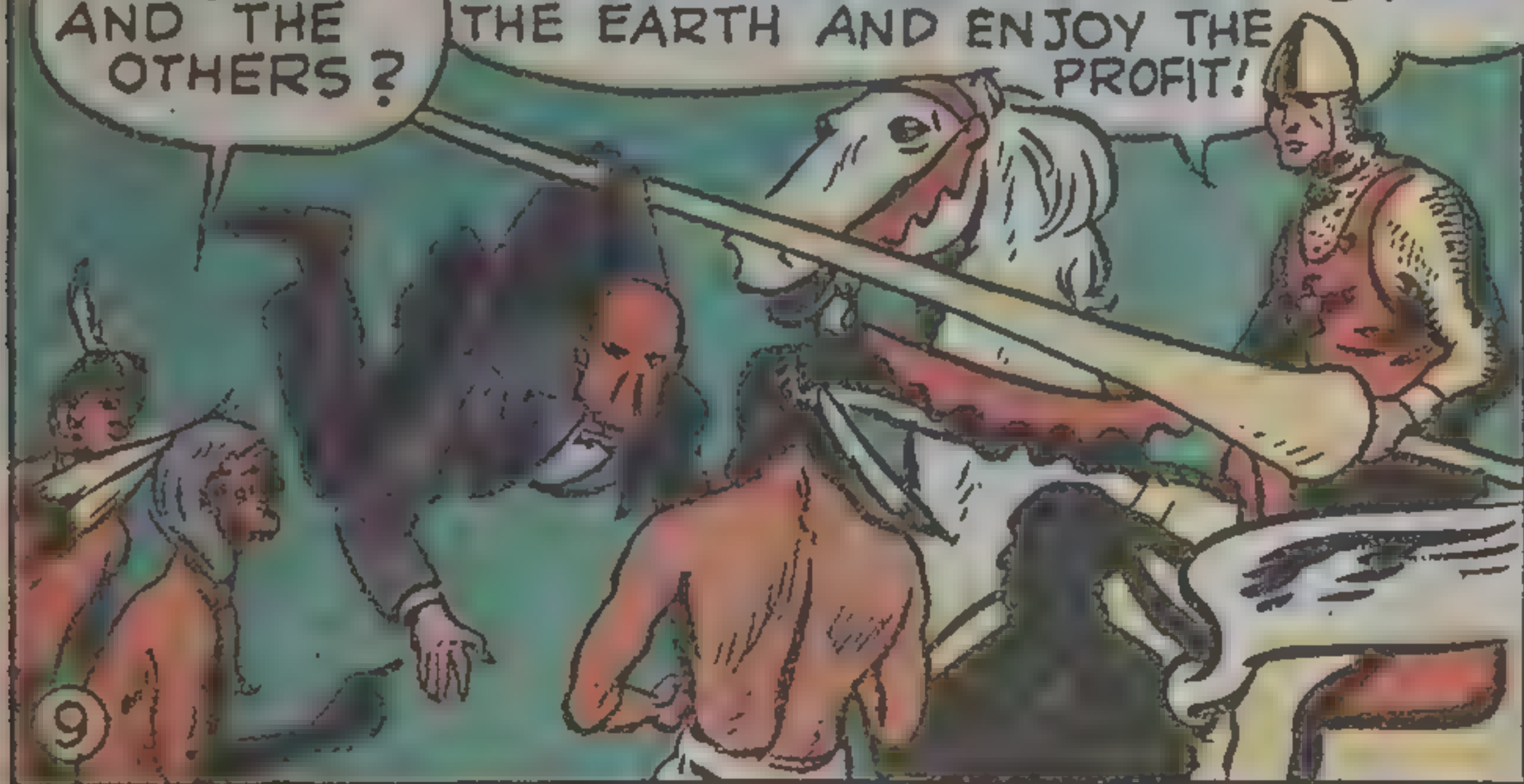


SO...LIKE A BEETLE ON A PIN I COLLECT THEE.



YOU HAVE SAVED US! SHALL WE KILL THIS MONSTER AND THE OTHERS?

NOT SO! LET YOUR WARRIORS LEAD THEM TO THE MEN OF THE OUTER WORLD WHO WILL PUNISH THEM PROPERLY! THERE, TOO, YOU CAN SELL THE RICHES YOU DUG FROM THE EARTH AND ENJOY THE PROFIT!



AND SO THE STRANGE, OLD PROPHECY OF THE TRIP WAS FULFILLED... A MIGHTY VISITOR FLEW DOWN FROM THE SKY, OVERTHREW THE MASTER OF THE VALLEY, AND ENRICHED THE PEOPLE WHO LIVED THERE...



AND NOW THE SCENE SHIFTS BACK ONCE MORE TO THE HIDEOUT OF THE HAND!

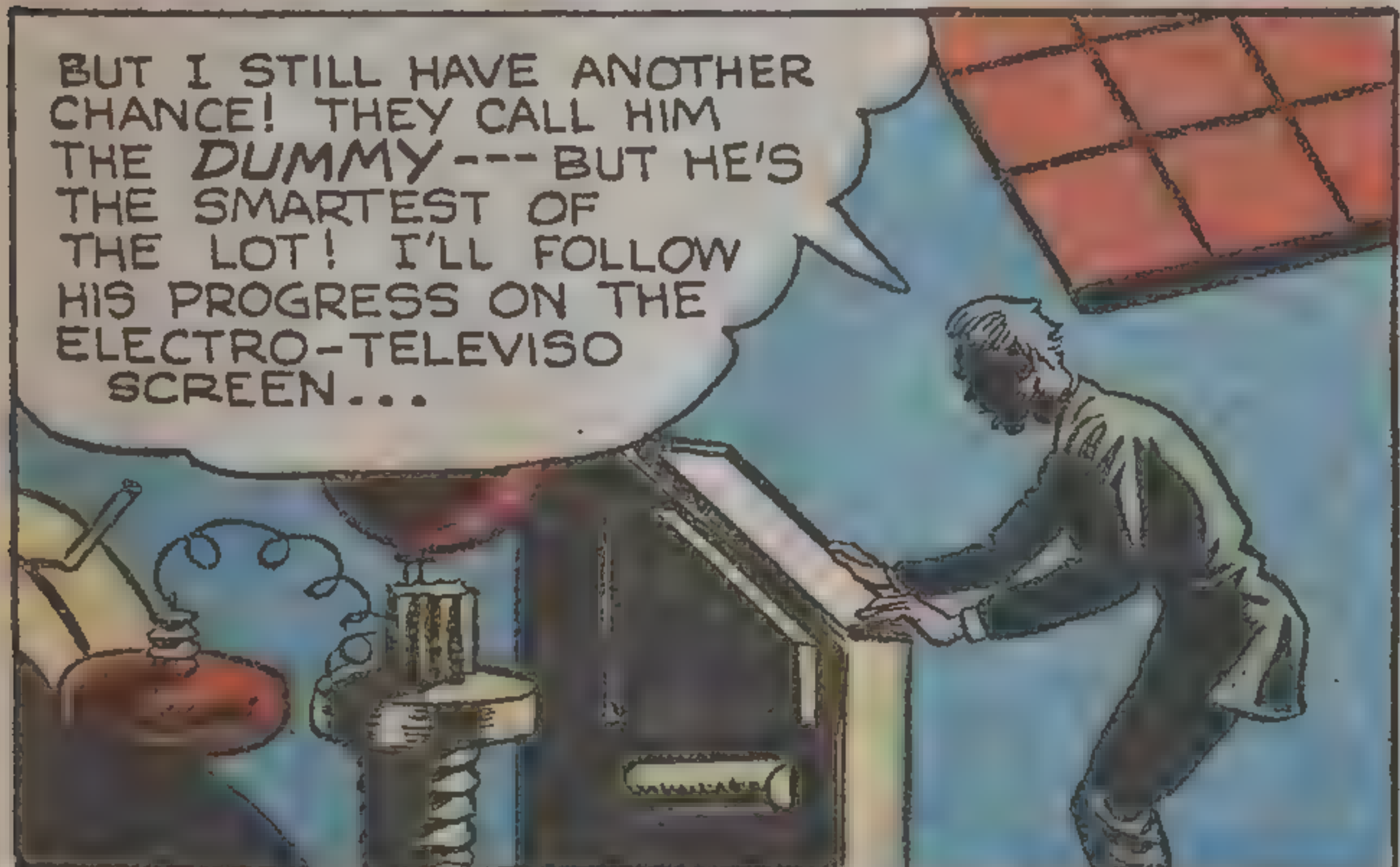
EASY, HAND, EASY NOW! DON'T LOSE YOUR TEMPER AGAIN! AFTER ALL, THE RED DRAGON DID HIS BEST...



THE SHINING KNIGHT SIMPLY OUTMATCHED HIM, THAT'S ALL!



BUT I STILL HAVE ANOTHER CHANCE! THEY CALL HIM THE DUMMY--- BUT HE'S THE SMARTEST OF THE LOT! I'LL FOLLOW HIS PROGRESS ON THE ELECTRO-TELEVISIO SCREEN...



---SO I'M THE DUMMY, EH? WELL, THE VIGILANTE WILL LOOK LIKE A DUMMY WHEN I GET FINISHED WITH HIM!



The SHINING KNIGHT rides to victory every month in ADVENTURE COMICS



by Eric Carter

SCREENED by the full drapes of the French windows in the Norworth study, Silky Desmond's professional eye appraised the technique of the intruder attempting to open the wall safe. The man's ear was pressed closed to the steel dial and every few seconds he would stop to rub his fingers over a piece of sandpaper. That was the only thing about the technique that Silky didn't like. Nobody could ever say Silky didn't keep his fingers in shape.

A glow of pride ran through Silky as he thought of his record: no arrests, no convictions. This prideful sensation, however, was shortlived as Silky's mind reverted to the present. He became indignant.

Somehow, the underworld must have learned about the

jewels and money the Norworths kept in their safe. Silky had thought it his own secret. After all, he had been "casing" this house for three weeks. He knew that Thursday was the best time to try the safe because with the servants off until midnight or later, the Norworths usually went into the city to a play. Silky had trailed them three times.

* * *

Tonight, he had followed their car until it was well on the Parkway, headed toward the city. Then, he had returned to the dark, silent house and, parking the roadster had prepared to pull his haul. He might have been somebody visiting the Norworth's, an immaculate figure in evening dress.

Encountering no one, Silky had climbed the trellis to the second floor, jimmied a window and made his way softly to the study. There he had received his surprise: **someone**

already was working on the safe!

Silky's first impulse had been to use his gun. Then into his nimble mind had crept a grim jest: why not let this interloper finish the job, and simply gather up the loot?

With cat-like movements, Silky Desmond, king of safe crackers, slid behind the curtains. The man at the dial had heard nothing.

* * *

It was very still in the room, so quiet that Silky Desmond could hear the man's breathing as he leaned close to the safe. A thin trickle of light from a pencil flash provided the only illumination. It would be almost impossible to detect it from outside.

Suddenly, Silky Desmond's body tautened. Had his eyes seen a flash from outside? Silky turned his head slightly, just the merest glimpse. His eyes had not played him false. There was a policeman coming toward

the house and the moonlight had been reflected from his shield.

For but the fraction of a second, Silky's mind refused to function. Then, with the movements of a precision machine, it began to move. Somehow, the policeman must have seen the ray of light from the burglar's flash.

Silky stepped from behind the drapes, gun in hand, and addressed the man at the safe. "Don't move. Put up your hands!"

A gasp came from the man. His hands shot into the air.

* * *

Light flooded the room as Silky found the switch. Outside, the policeman was hurrying toward the French windows.

"Don't . . . don't . . . shoot, mister!" the safe-cracker pleaded. His face was white, his eyes wide as overcoat buttons.

Silky, watching the man narrowly, smiled to himself as he recognized his captive. It was Tommy Blane, an ordinary second story crook. Silky moved to the French windows, unfastened the catch to admit the surprised policeman. Tommy's eyes were fastened, snake-like on Silky's.

"What's going on here?" the policeman gasped.

"This man was trying to rob the safe," Silky said. "I'm Mr. Norworth's new secretary. The family went into the city to a show. I was upstairs, napping before going out, when I heard a noise. I came down and found this man at the safe."

The officer pulled out his revolver and unhooked handcuffs from his belt. Then, as he advanced toward Tommy, who was staring at Silky, surprise colored his voice: "Tommy Blane! Well, you sure were lucky to get him, Mister. Headquarters wants to ask Tommy about a lot of safe-cracking in this neighborhood."

"A wanted crook?" Silky said in feigned excitement. He grinned as the policeman snapped cuffs on Tommy.

"Wait a minute!" Tommy's

voice was excited. "I know who this is now, officer. This is Silky Desmond. He's trying to get away with a rap himself, I tell you!" His voice rose angrily toward Silky. "I get it now. You were hiding there, waiting for me to open the safe, then you'd conk me and grab the stuff."

"Shut up! Don't try pulling any tricks on me." The officer spun Tommy around. "Anybody can see this man's not a crook. Guys in your racket don't go around dressed in evening clothes." He pushed the protesting Tommy toward the door. "I've got my chariot waiting outside for you. Move!"

"I'll be down with Mr. Norworth in the morning to appear against this desperado," Silky said smoothly. He was enjoying himself now.

"That's fine," the officer said. Then, a frown appeared on his face. "Just a minute, sir. You'd better look in the safe to make sure everything's there. You've got the combination?"

* * *

Silky's head felt suddenly light as blood pounded his temples. "Why . . . uh . . . yes," he gasped. "I—I—have. . . ."

"Better look, sir." The officer's voice was determined. "It ought to be in my report."

Silky studied the gun in the officer's hand. It wouldn't do to reach for his now. He took a deep breath and went toward the safe. His long fingers twirled the dial and he strained his ears to detect any falling of the tumblers within the safe. His mind busied itself with thoughts of escape. Perhaps he could shoot his way out of this, get the gun from his pocket unnoticed.

And then it happened. To Silky's acute ears came the faintest of clicks. The tumblers had fallen back! Tommy must have had the safe almost open!

Smiling, Silky opened the door and withdrew a packet of banknotes and some gem cases. His triumphant eyes looked at Tommy, whose teeth were worrying white lips. Well, let

him be worried. He had his nerve trying to crash in on this job.

"They're all here," Silky said. "Everything's in order." He walked toward the officer, holding out his hand. "I'm sure Mr. Norworth will take care of you tomorrow, officer," he said. "We'll be down to the station early."

Madness tenanted Tommy Blane's eyes as his high-pitched voice said; "I'm telling you, officer, you're making a mistake! This guy's Silky Desmond. Look—"

The officer's push sent him reeling out the door. "Tell it to the Captain," he said. "He'll be glad to see you!"

Alone, Silky contemplated his loot. He was well pleased with himself. Once more he had outwitted the police, and this time a fellow cracksman as well.

Five minutes later, the safe closed and its former contents filling his pockets, Silky stepped out the front door and made his way swiftly across the lawn to his car, his mind filled with visions of a trip to South America.

* * *

He was just stepping into the car when a light shone full on his eyes.

"Keep 'em up, Silky!" a familiar voice said. "I think maybe you ought to see the Captain, too."

Silky reached for his gun as he recognized the officer's voice. A gun barked and Silky fell against the car, bullet in his shoulder. An instant later, his bewildered eyes saw himself handcuffed to Tommy Blane.

The cop's hand was busy extracting the loot from Silky's pockets and, as though in a dream, Silky was hearing the officer say: "I should have noticed it myself, Blane, and if you weren't a crook, I'd thank you."

His hand yanked Silky to his feet. "Too bad you didn't think fast, either, Silky. *Anyone who knows the combination of a safe looks at the numbers. You didn't!*"

The

VIGILANTE

DEATH HOLDS THE SPOTLIGHT WHEN A MYSTERIOUS MANIKIN OF MURDER INVADES THE GLITTERING REALM OF FILMLAND! AND INTO THIS GLAMOROUS WORLD OF MAKE-BELIEVE CRASHES THE VIGILANTE, ACE LAWMAN FROM ACROSS THE WYOMING PLAINS, TO BATTLE THE DUMMY, SINISTER EMISSARY OF THE HAND, WITH WESTERN WITS AND WEAPONS! MORE FANTASTIC THAN THE MOST BIZARRE STORY EVER FILMED IS THE PERILOUS ADVENTURE OF "THE STONE PEOPLE!"



HOLLYWOOD--
MECCA OF
MOVIELAND! AND
BRILLIANT BEAMS OF
LIGHT STAB OUT IN
A SALUTE TO REX
MASON, KING
OF CINEMA.

THERE
HE GOES--
REX
MASON!

BOY, WHAT
I'D GIVE TO
ATTEND
THIS
PREMIERE!

NINETY
MINUTES
LATER--AND
ANOTHER SCREEN
TRIUMPH IS
CHALKED UP
FOR
MOVIEDOM'S
FAVORITE.

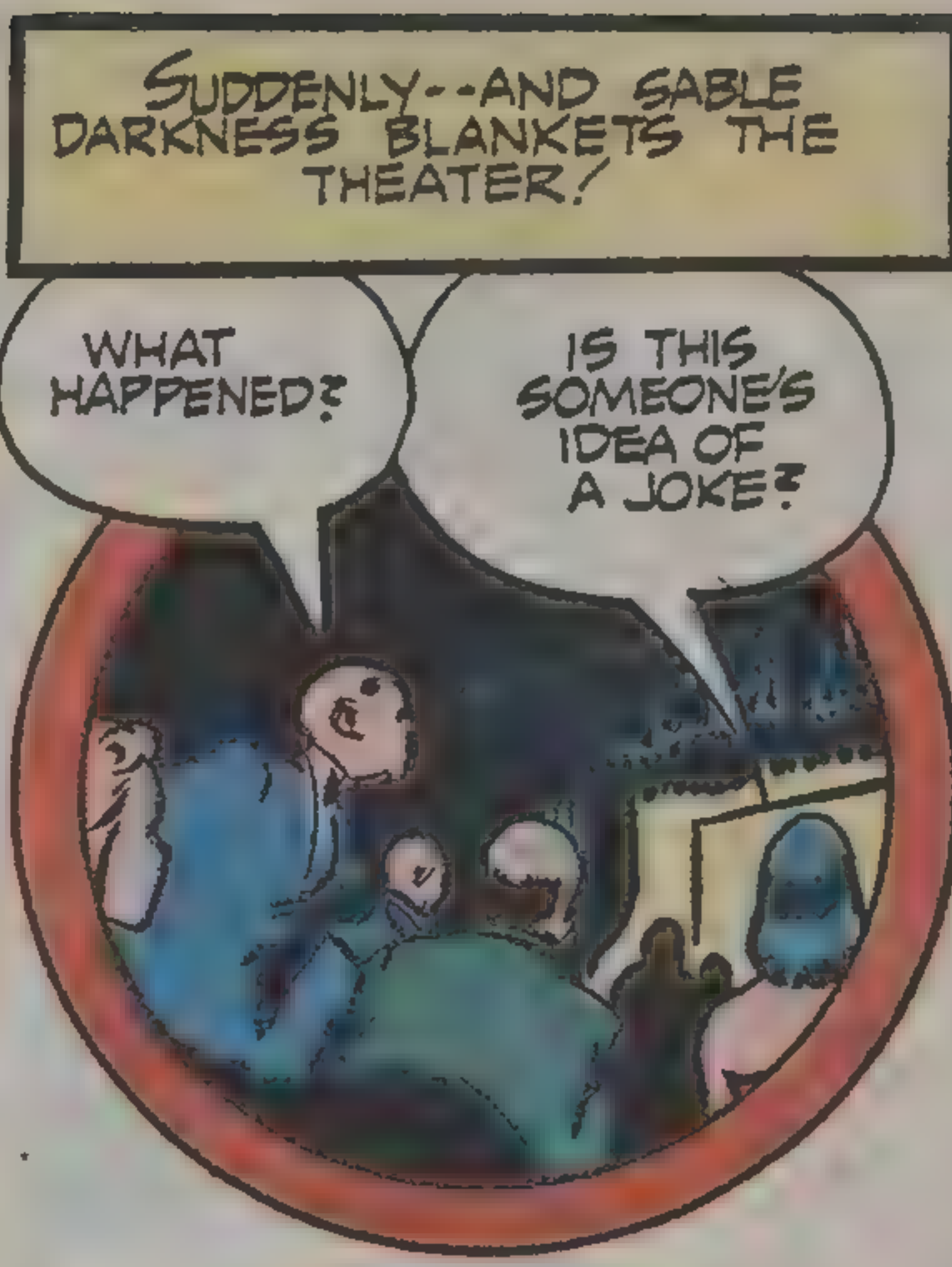
WE
WANT
MASON!

BRAVO!

The
End



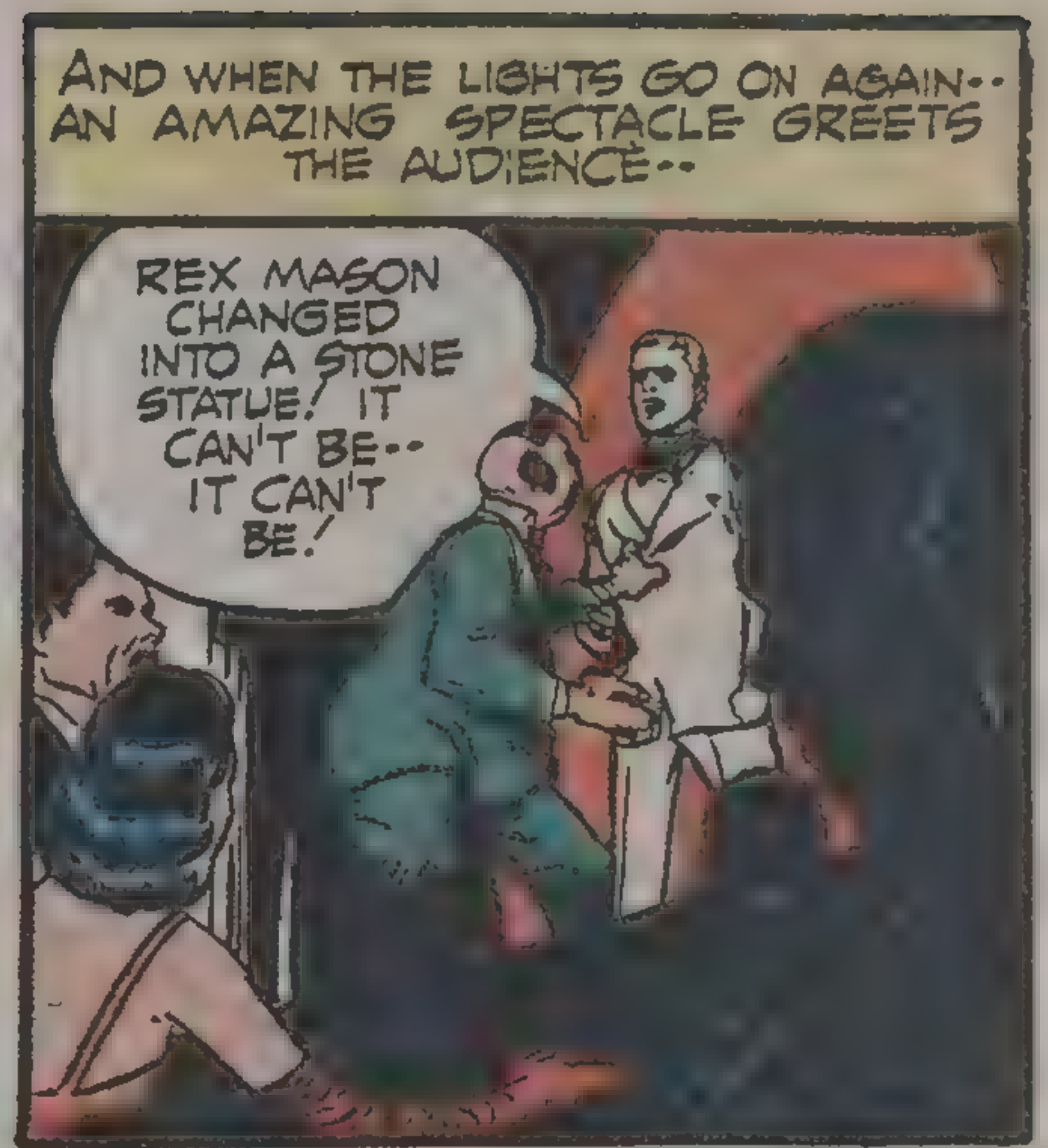
AND NOW
I GIVE YOU
THE HERO
OF 'AIRCRAFT
CARRIER--'
EVERYBODY'S
HERO--REX
MASON, IN
PERSON!



SUDDENLY--AND SABLE
DARKNESS BLANKETS THE
THEATER!

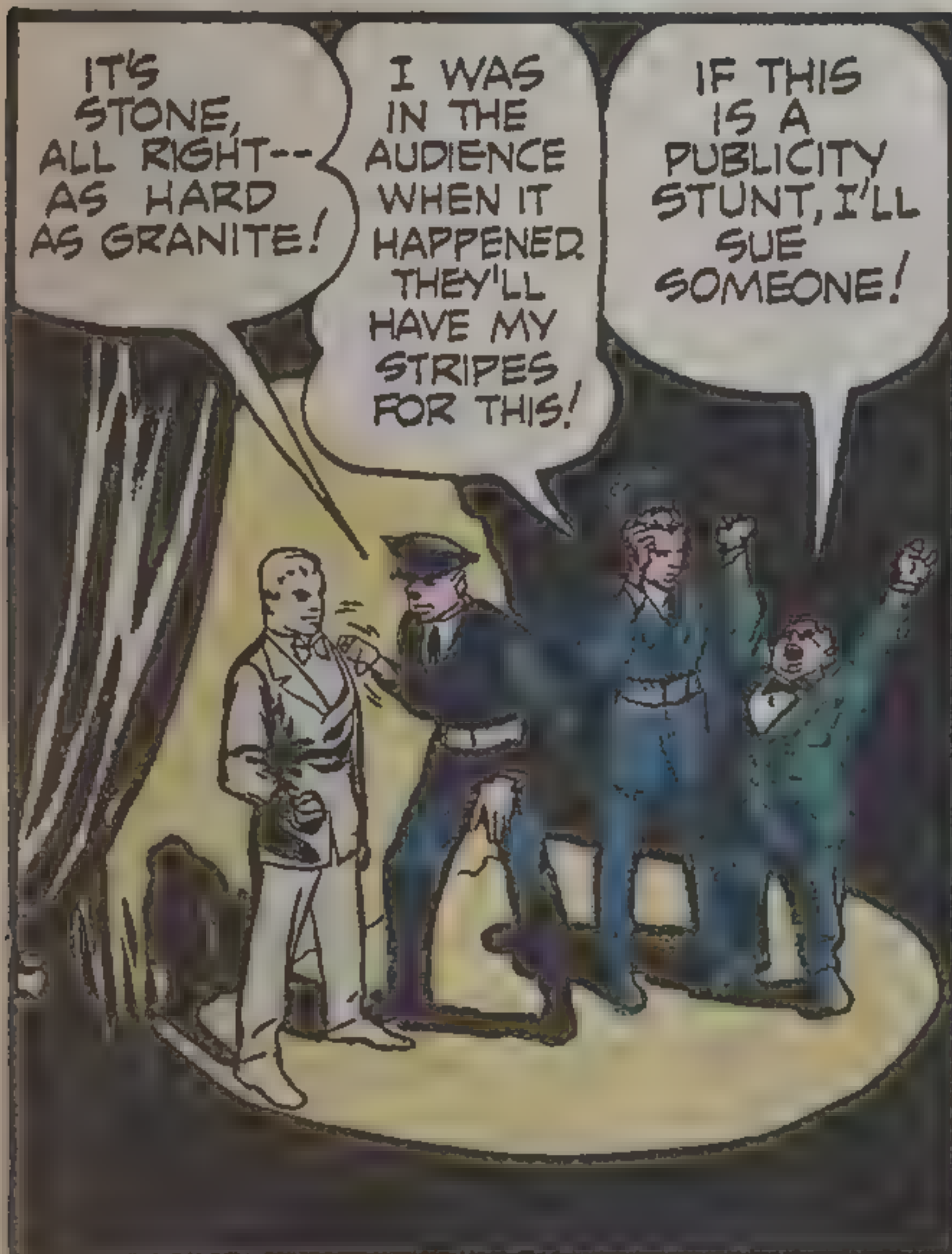
WHAT
HAPPENED?

IS THIS
SOMEONE'S
IDEA OF
A JOKE?



AND WHEN THE LIGHTS GO ON AGAIN--
AN AMAZING SPECTACLE GREET'S
THE AUDIENCE--

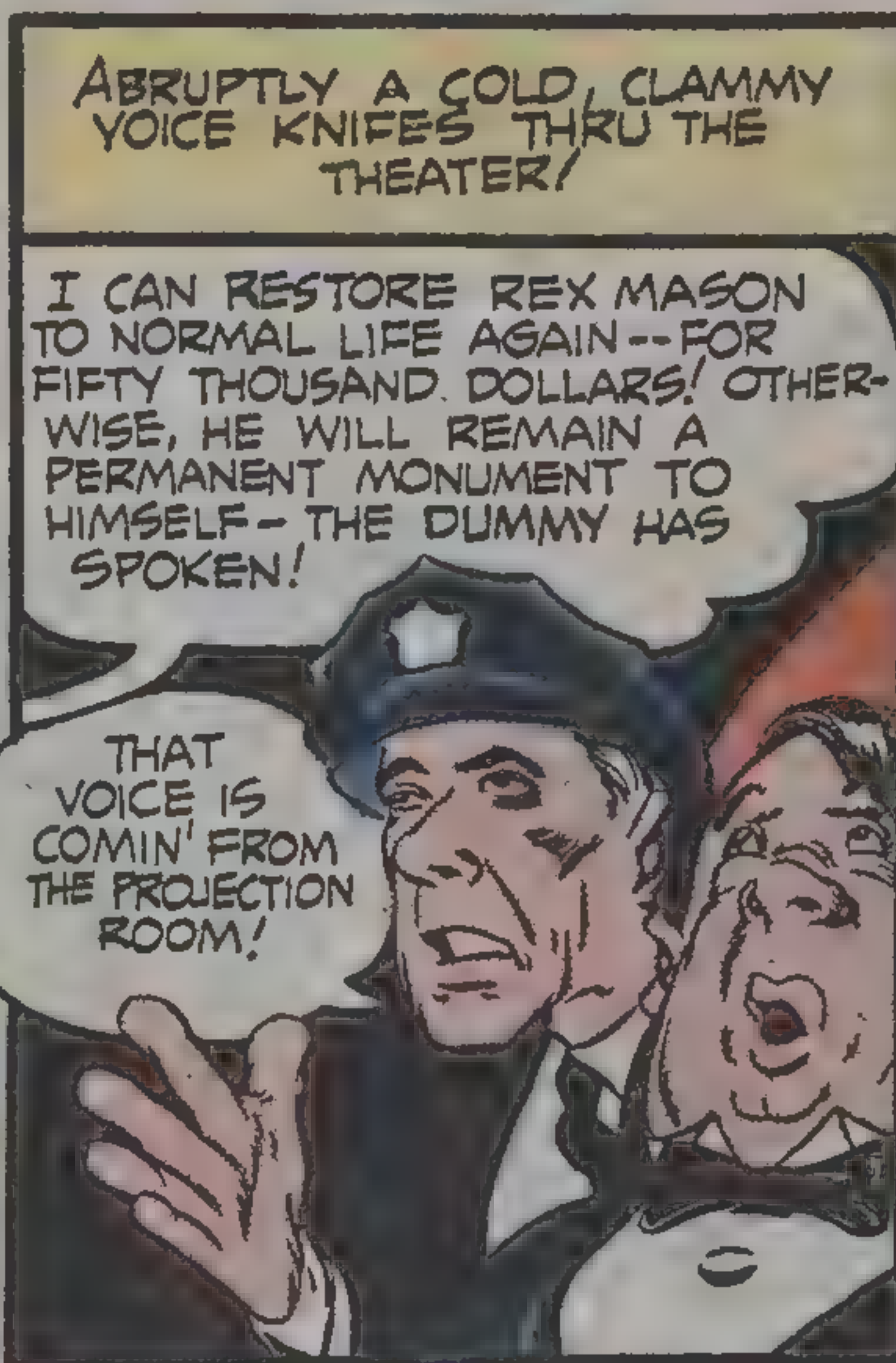
REX MASON
CHANGED
INTO A STONE
STATUE! IT
CAN'T BE--
IT CAN'T
BE!



IT'S
STONE,
ALL RIGHT--
AS HARD
AS GRANITE!

I WAS
IN THE
AUDIENCE
WHEN IT
HAPPENED
THEY'LL
HAVE MY
STRIPES
FOR THIS!

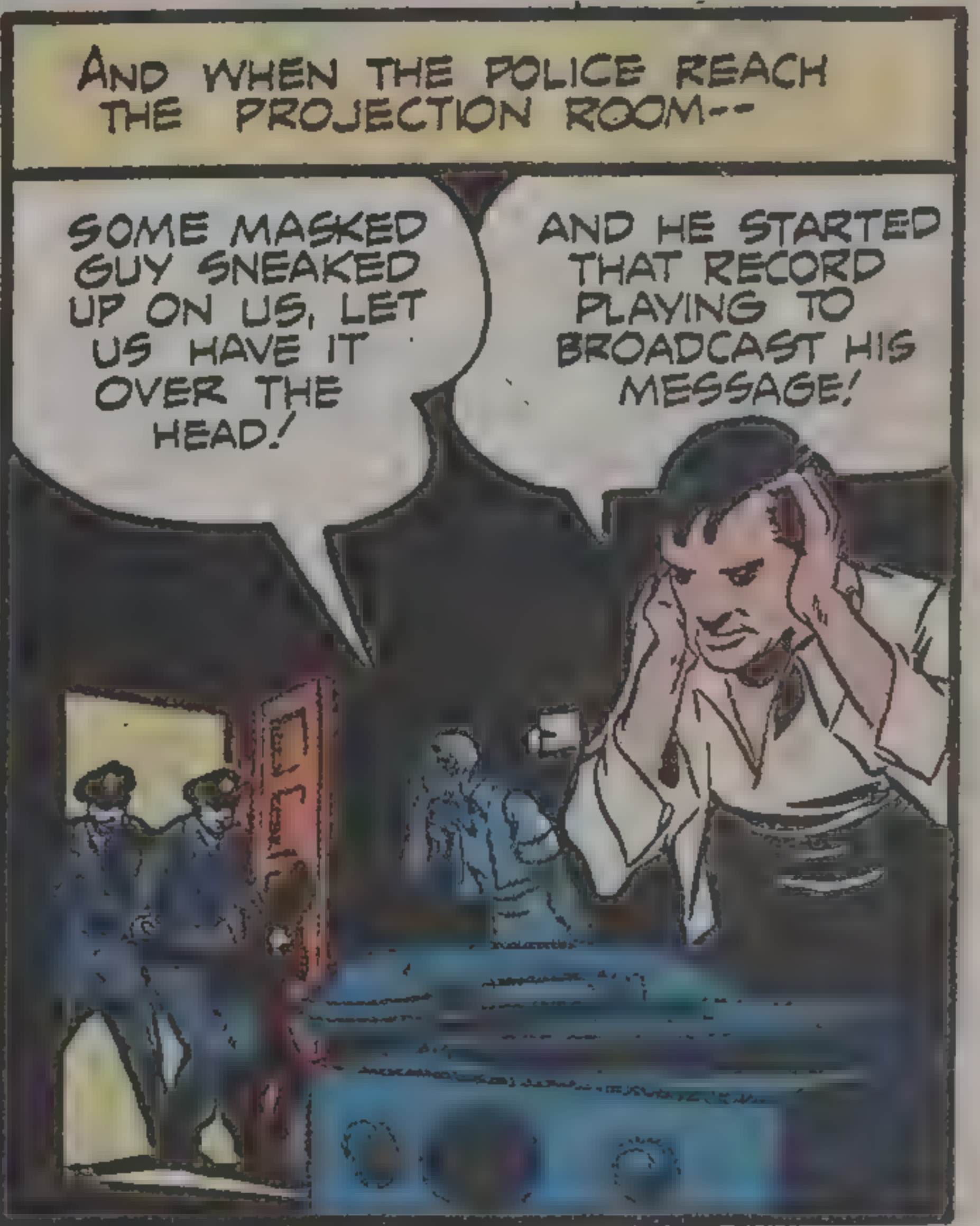
IF THIS
IS A
PUBLICITY
STUNT, I'LL
SUE
SOMEONE!



ABRUPTLY A COLD, CLAMMY
VOICE KNIFES THRU THE
THEATER!

I CAN RESTORE REX MASON
TO NORMAL LIFE AGAIN--FOR
FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS! OTHER-
WISE, HE WILL REMAIN A
PERMANENT MONUMENT TO
HIMSELF--THE DUMMY HAS
SPOKEN!

THAT
VOICE IS
COMIN' FROM
THE PROJECTION
ROOM!

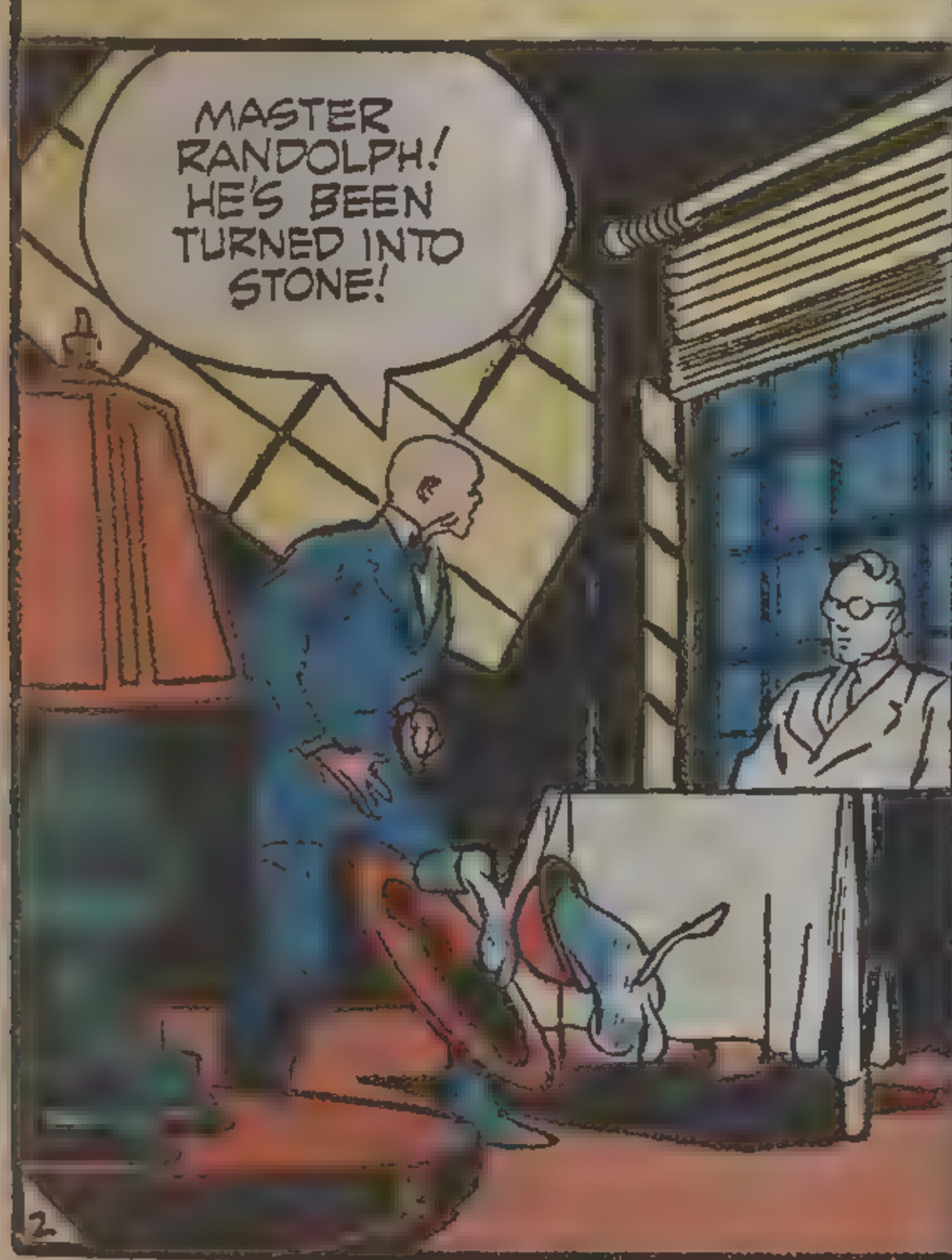


AND WHEN THE POLICE REACH
THE PROJECTION ROOM--

SOME MASKED
GUY SNEAKED
UP ON US, LET
US HAVE IT
OVER THE
HEAD!

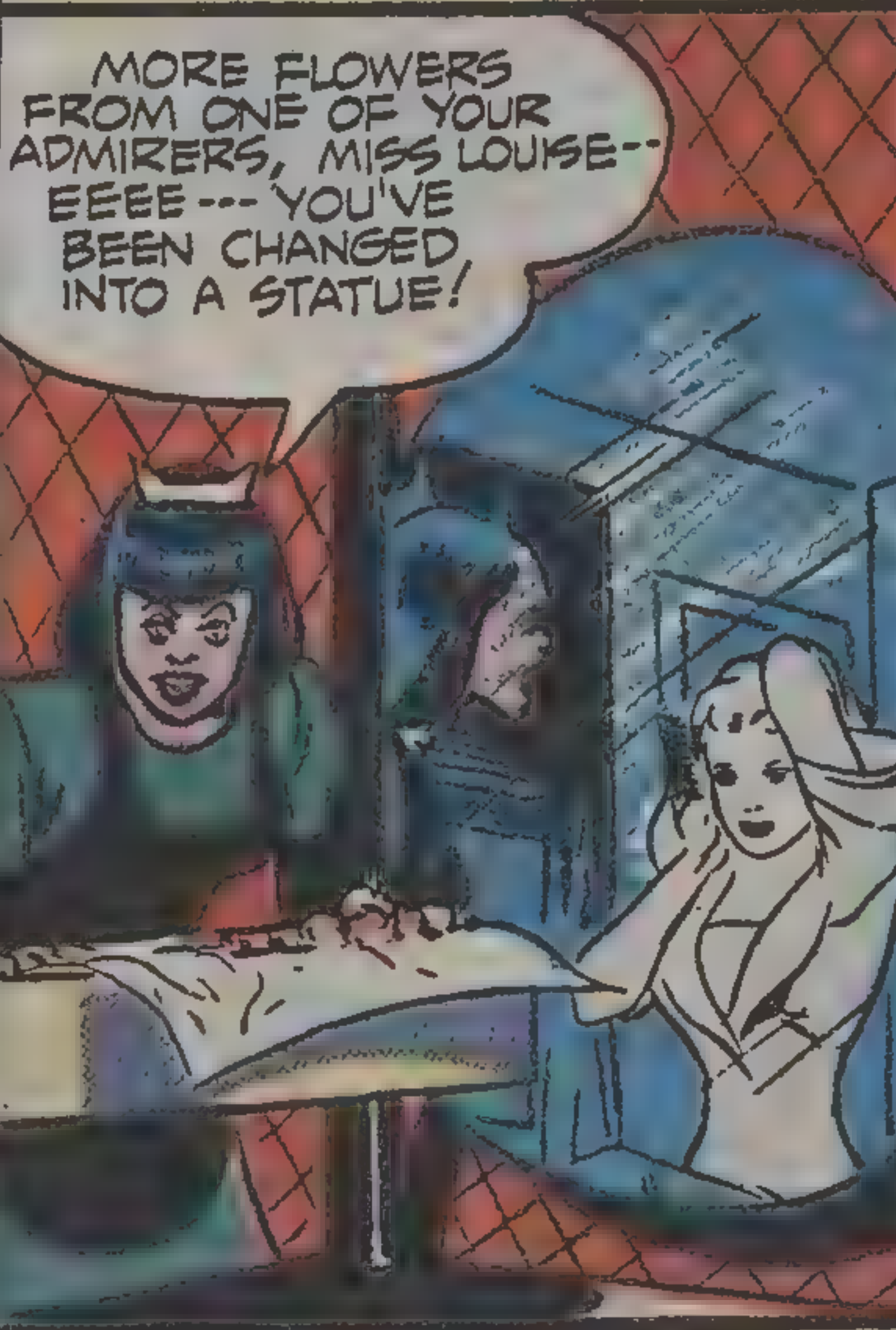
AND HE STARTED
THAT RECORD
PLAYING TO
BROADCAST HIS
MESSAGE!

THE DUMMY, SINISTER SCIENTIST
OF THE CENTURY, STRIKES AGAIN
THE NEXT MORNING AT THE HOME
OF BARRY RANDOLPH, FAMOUS DIRECTOR!



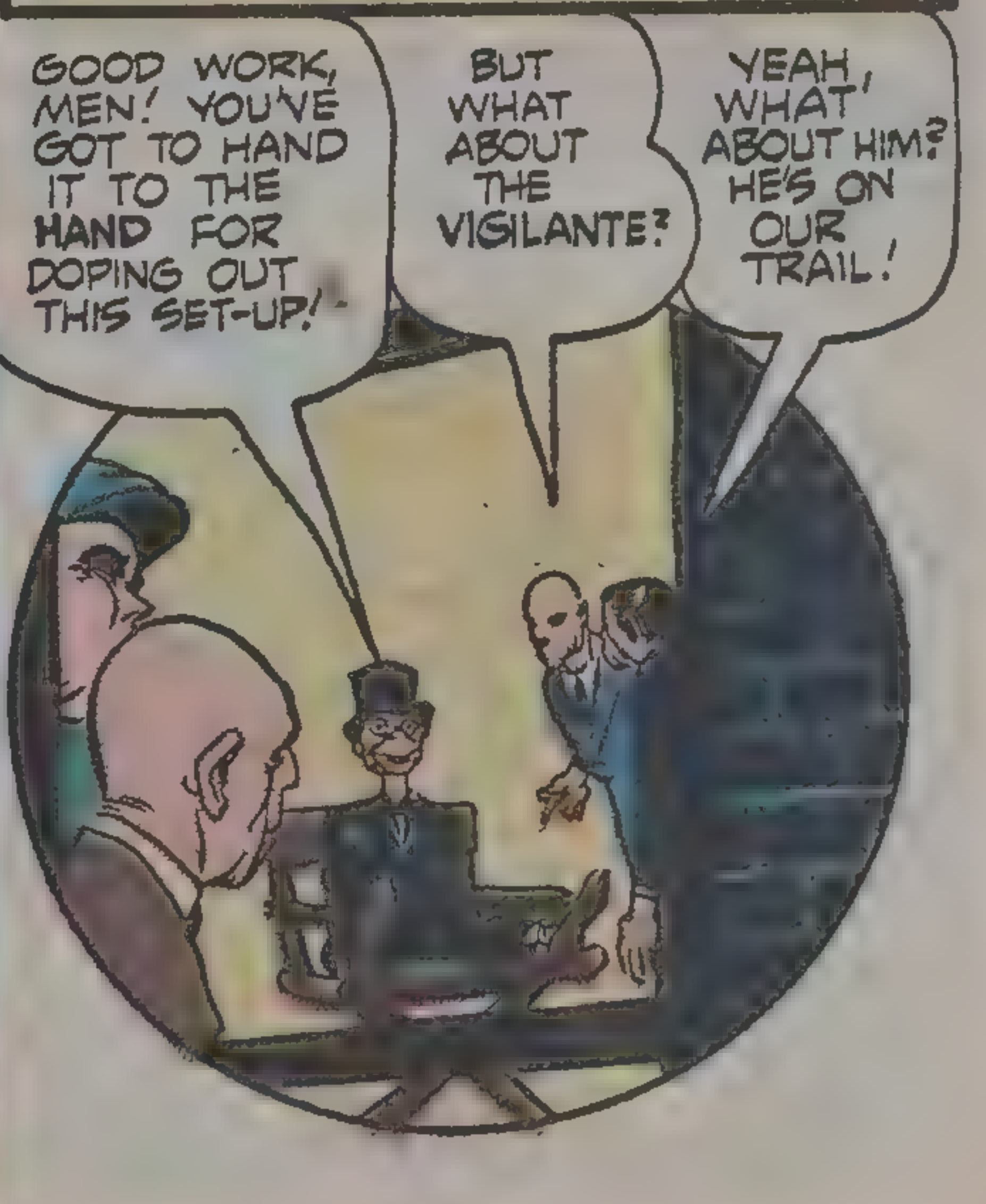
MASTER
RANDOLPH!
HE'S BEEN
TURNED INTO
STONE!

EXOTIC MOVIE STAR LOUISE LILA
ALSO FALLS VICTIM TO THE SAME
BAFFLING DOOM--



MORE FLOWERS
FROM ONE OF YOUR
ADMIRERS, MISS LOUISE--
EEEE-- YOU'VE
BEEN CHANGED
INTO A STATUE!

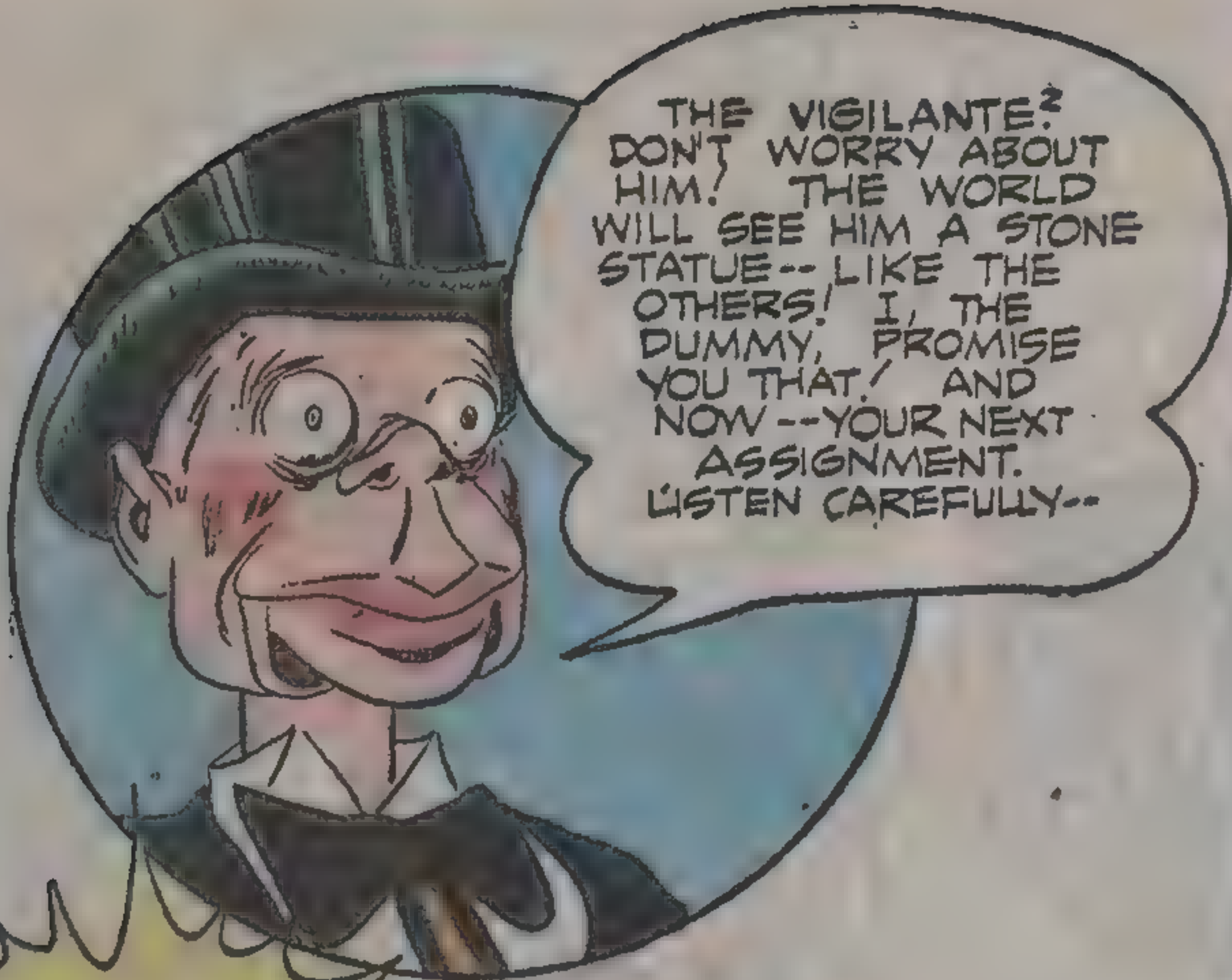
LATER--IN A SECRET LABORATORY--
FOUR OUTLAWS LISTEN TENSELY AS A
VENTRILOQUIST'S DUMMY ISSUES ORDERS
IN A FALSETTO VOICE ---



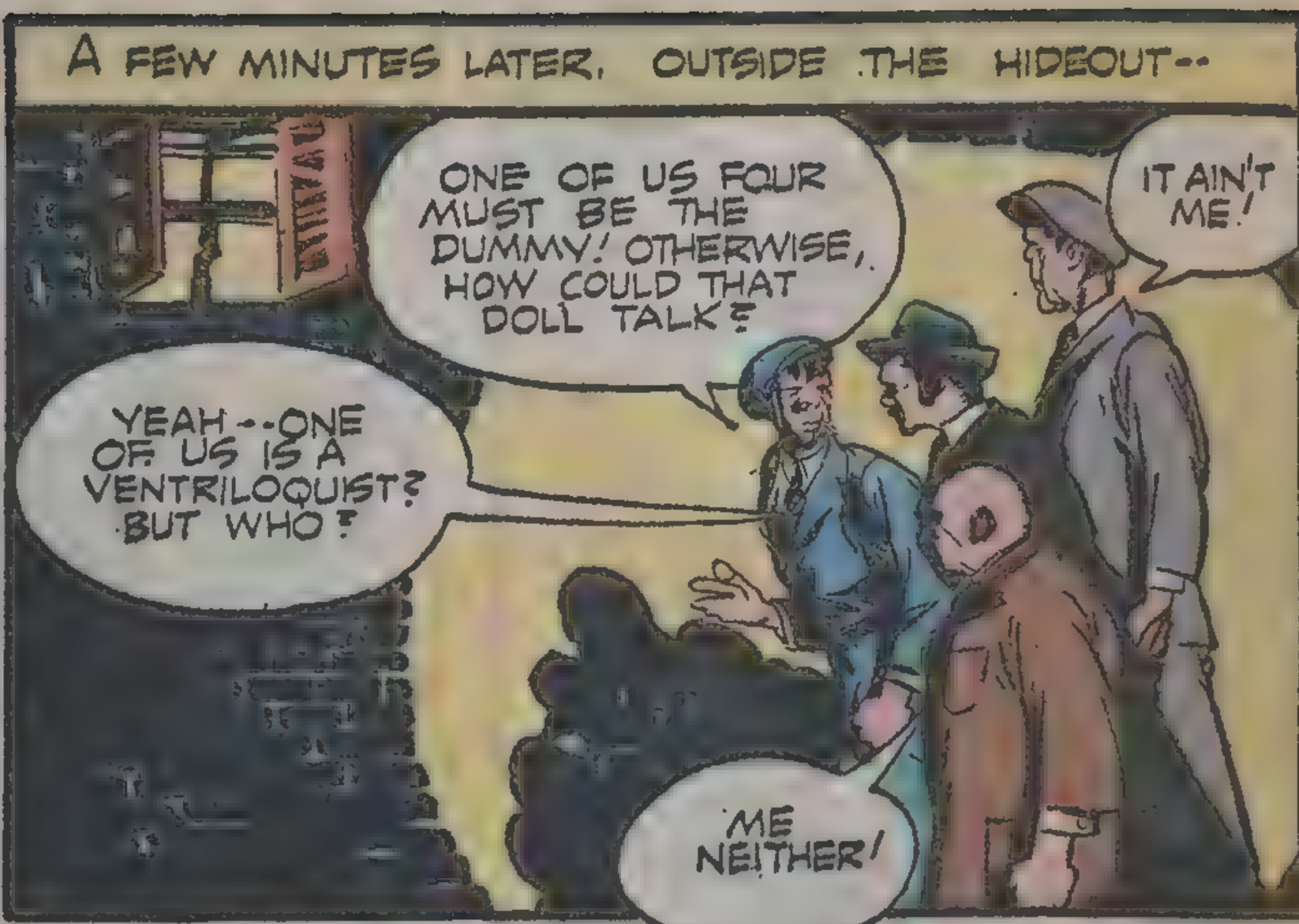
GOOD WORK,
MEN! YOU'VE
GOT TO HAND
IT TO THE
HAND FOR
DOPING OUT
THIS SET-UP!

BUT
WHAT
ABOUT
THE
VIGILANTE?

YEAH,
WHAT
ABOUT HIM?
HE'S ON
OUR
TRAIL!



THE VIGILANTE?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT
HIM! THE WORLD
WILL SEE HIM A STONE
STATUE-- LIKE THE
OTHERS! I, THE
DUMMY, PROMISE
YOU THAT! AND
NOW--YOUR NEXT
ASSIGNMENT.
LISTEN CAREFULLY--

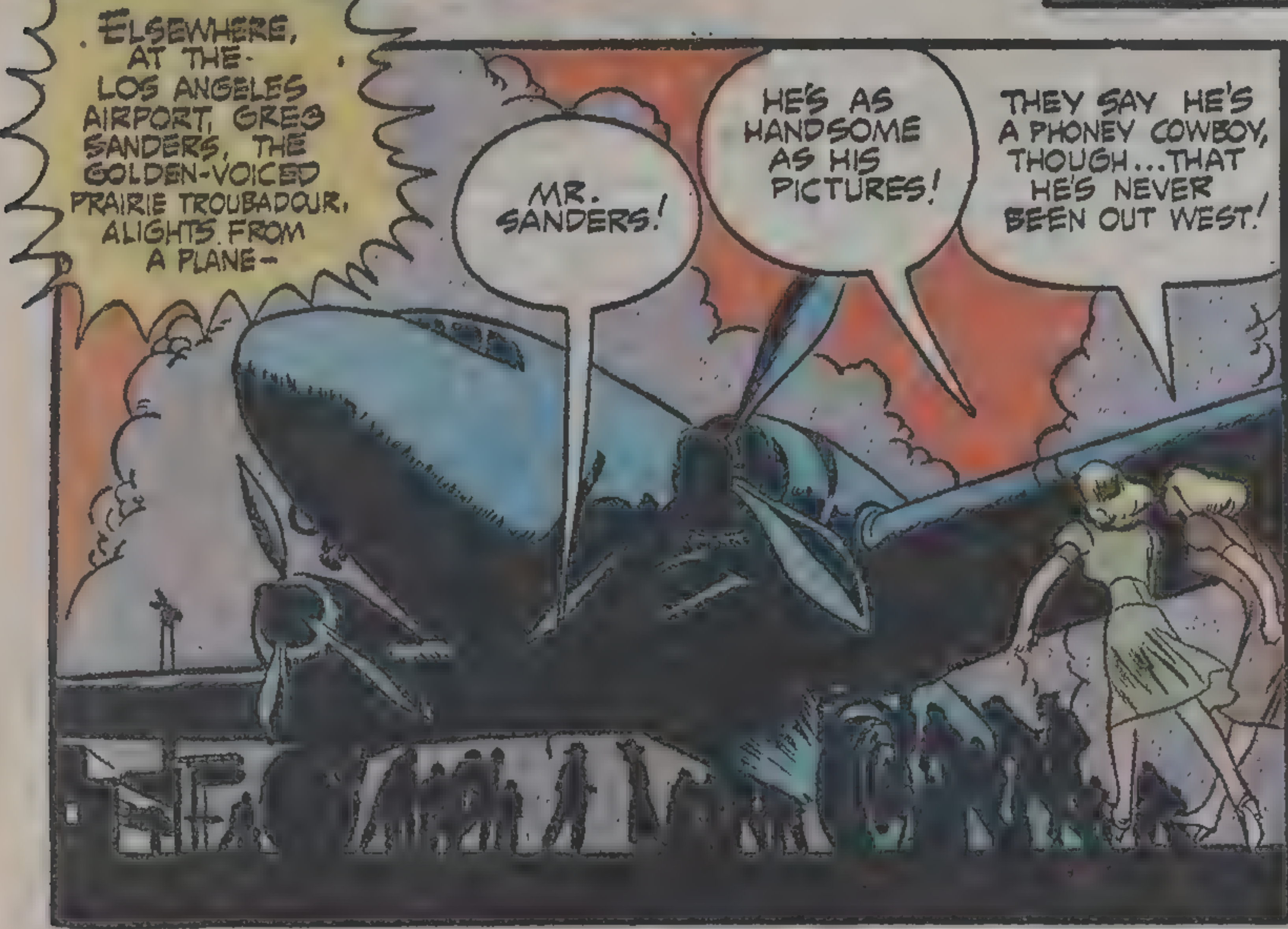


YEAH--ONE
OF US IS A
VENTRILOQUIST?
BUT WHO?

ONE OF US FOUR
MUST BE THE
DUMMY! OTHERWISE,
HOW COULD THAT
DOLL TALK?

IT AIN'T
ME!

ME
NEITHER!

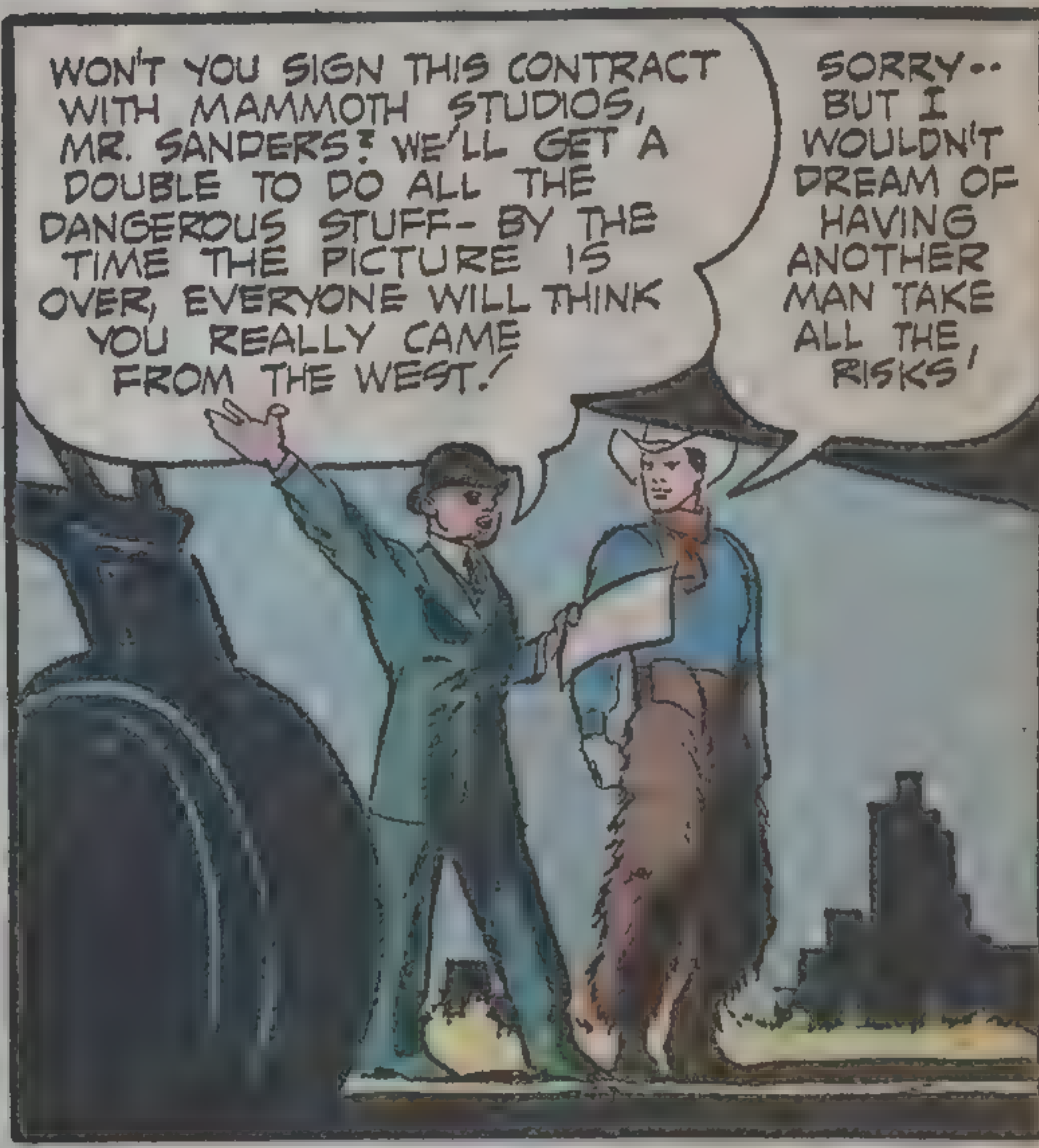


ELSEWHERE,
AT THE
LOS ANGELES
AIRPORT, GREG
SANDERS, THE
GOLDEN-VOICED
PRAIRIE TROUBADOUR,
ALIGHTS FROM
A PLANE--

MR.
SANDERS!

HE'S AS
HANDSOME
AS HIS
PICTURES!

THEY SAY HE'S
A PHONEY COWBOY,
THOUGH...THAT
HE'S NEVER
BEEN OUT WEST!



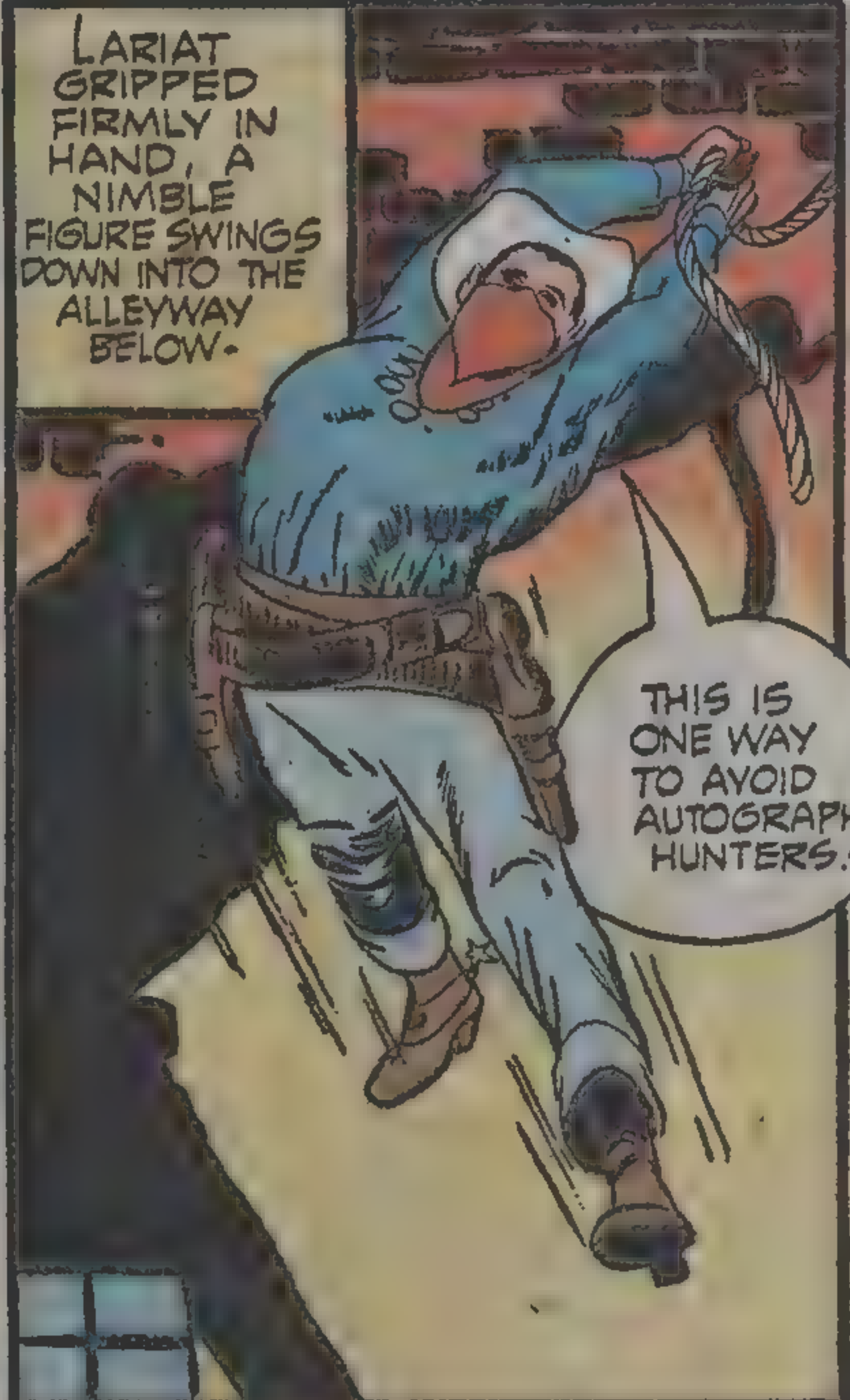
WON'T YOU SIGN THIS CONTRACT
WITH MAMMOTH STUDIOS,
MR. SANDERS? WE'LL GET A
DOUBLE TO DO ALL THE
DANGEROUS STUFF-- BY THE
TIME THE PICTURE IS
OVER, EVERYONE WILL THINK
YOU REALLY CAME
FROM THE WEST!

SORRY--
BUT I
WOULDN'T
DREAM OF
HAVING
ANOTHER
MAN TAKE
ALL THE
RISKS!



LATER, IN THE PRIVACY OF HIS
HOTEL ROOM-- A LIGHTNING
CHANGE--AND GREG SANDERS ONCE
AGAIN BECOMES THE VIGILANTE,
CRIME-CRUSHING PLAINSMAN!

SURE IS A RELIEF
TO SHUCK OFF MY
DUDE OUTFIT, AND
NOW TO TAKE
FRENCH LEAVE!



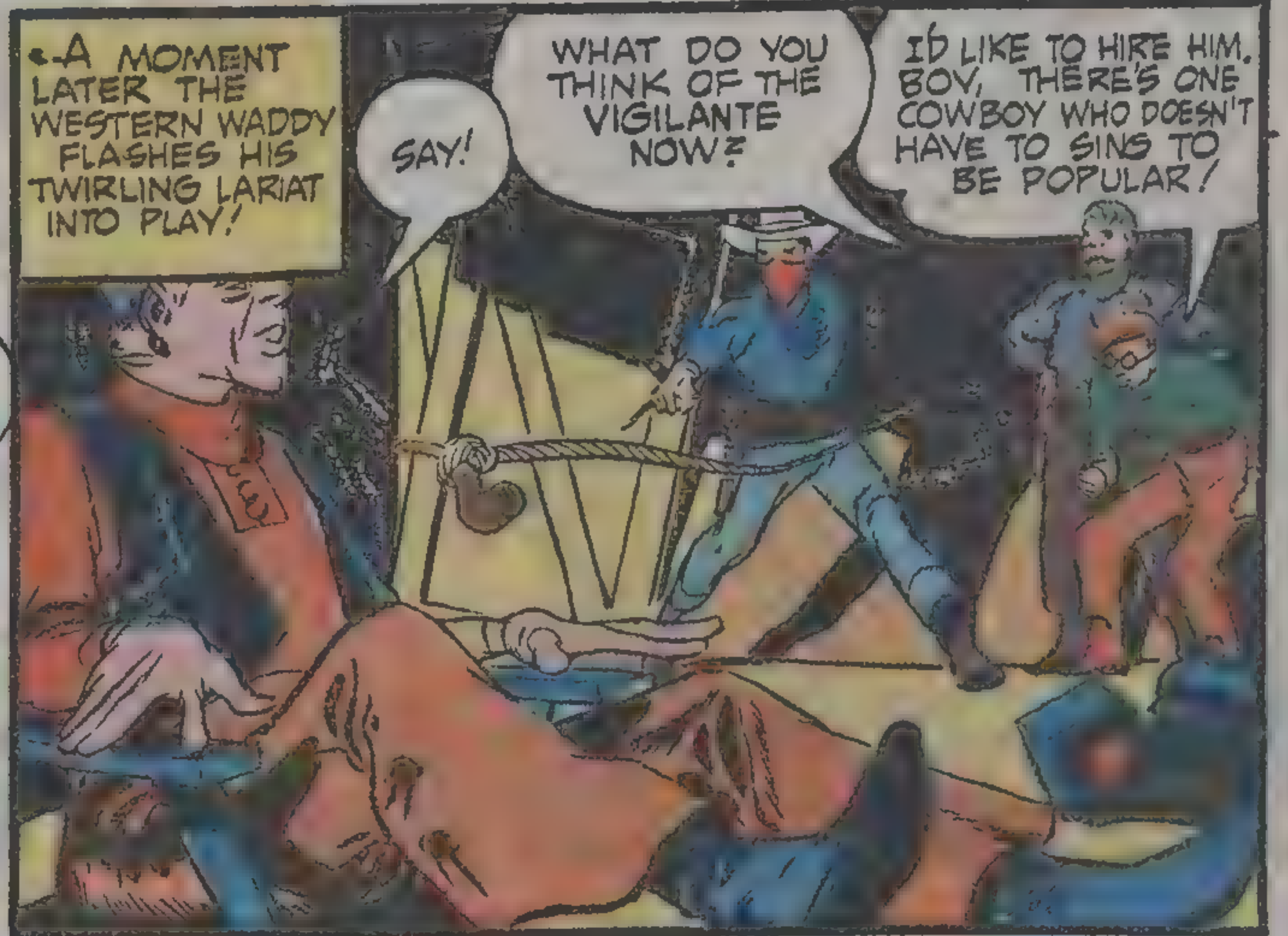
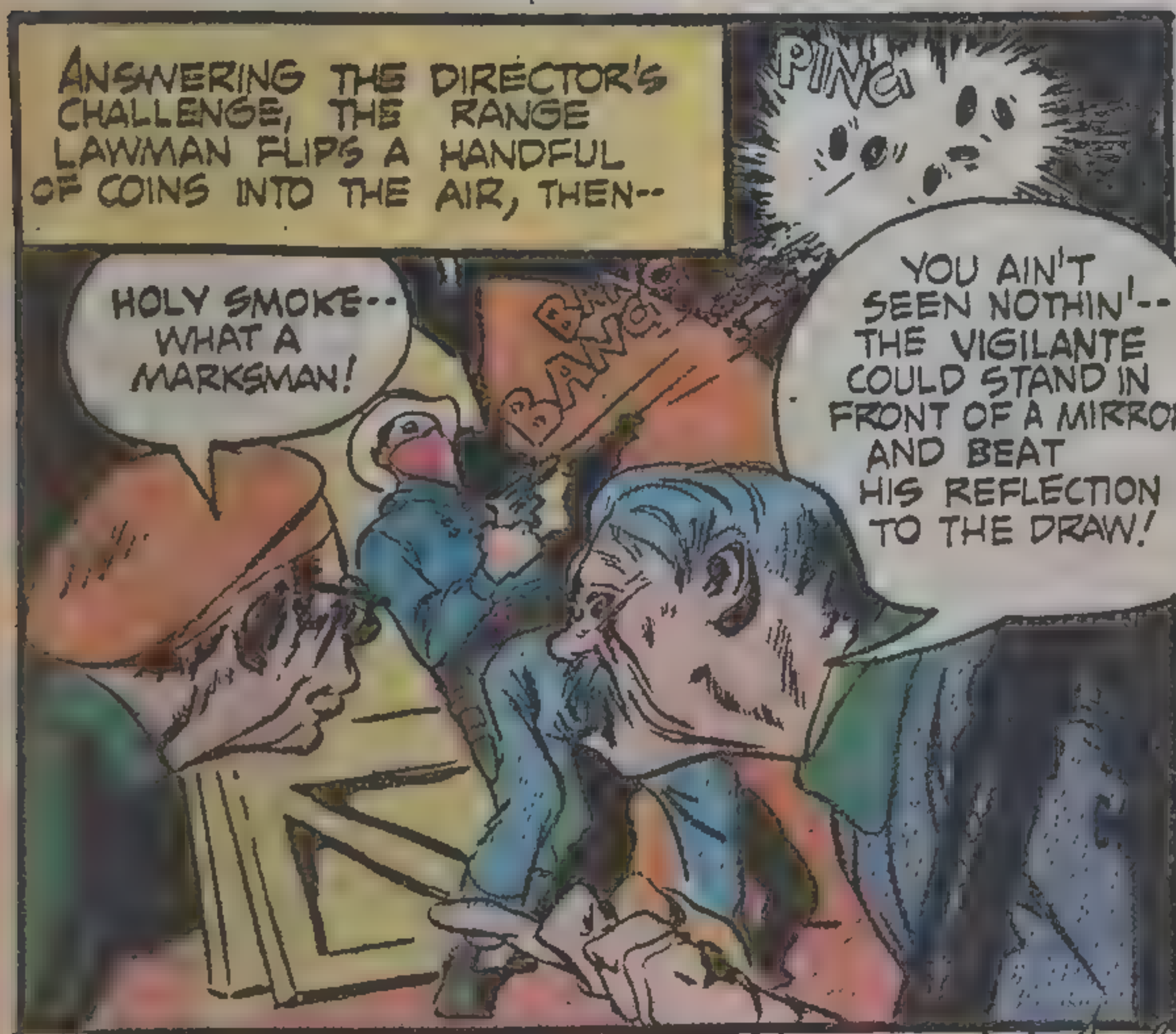
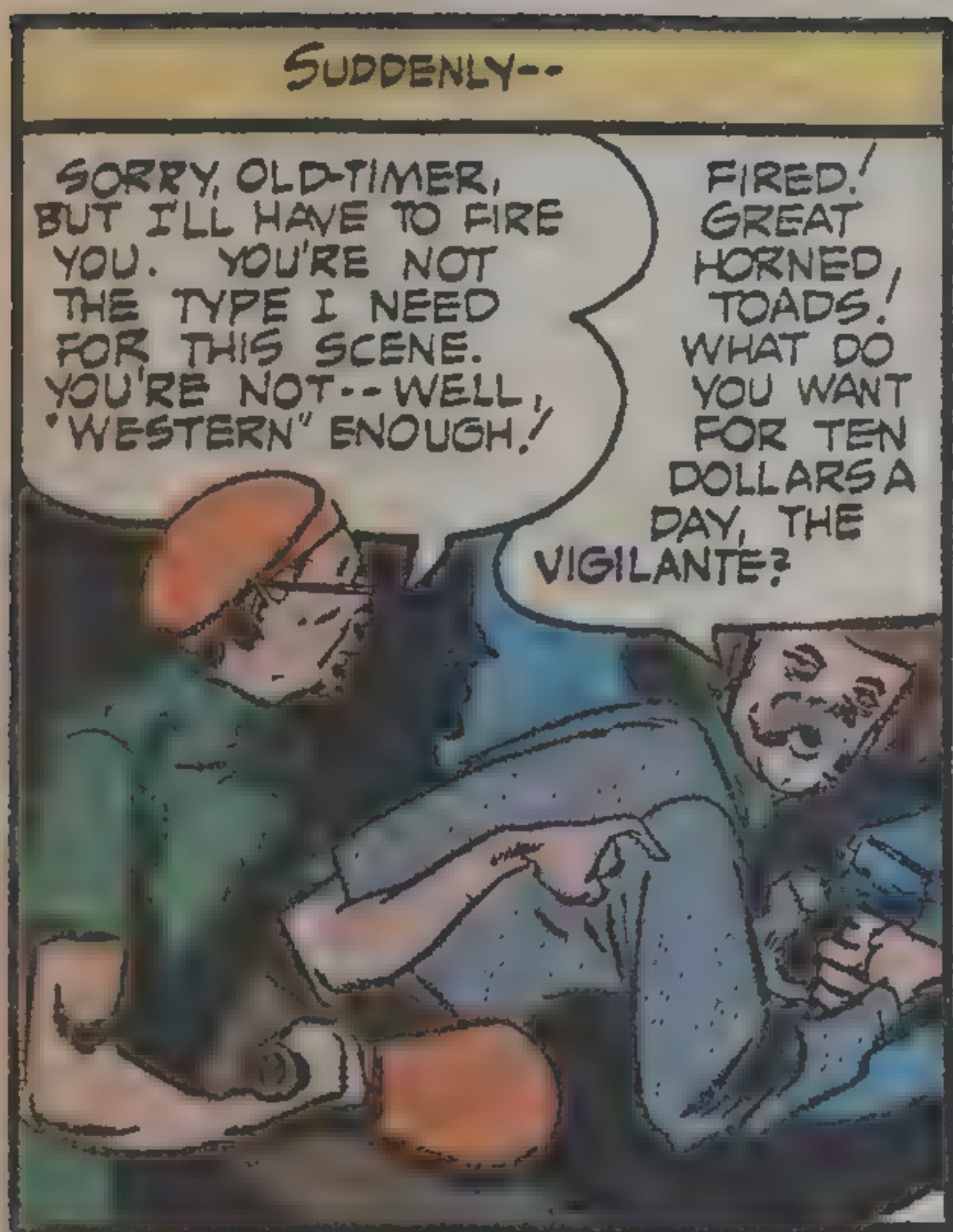
LARIAT
GRIPPED
FIRMLY IN
HAND, A
NIMBLE
FIGURE SWINGS
DOWN INTO THE
ALLEYWAY
BELOW.

THIS IS
ONE WAY
TO AVOID
AUTOGRAPH
HUNTERS!



NOT FAR AWAY, ON THE SET OF
"SIX-GUN SERENADE," OLD BILLY
GUN BLAZES AWAY WITH TWIN
COLTS BEFORE THE CAMERA--

I MAY BE
ONLY AN EXTRA
IN THIS PICTURE--
BUT I BET I
STEAL THIS
SCENE!





AN' HERE'S AN EXTRA POINT-- FROM AN EXTRA!

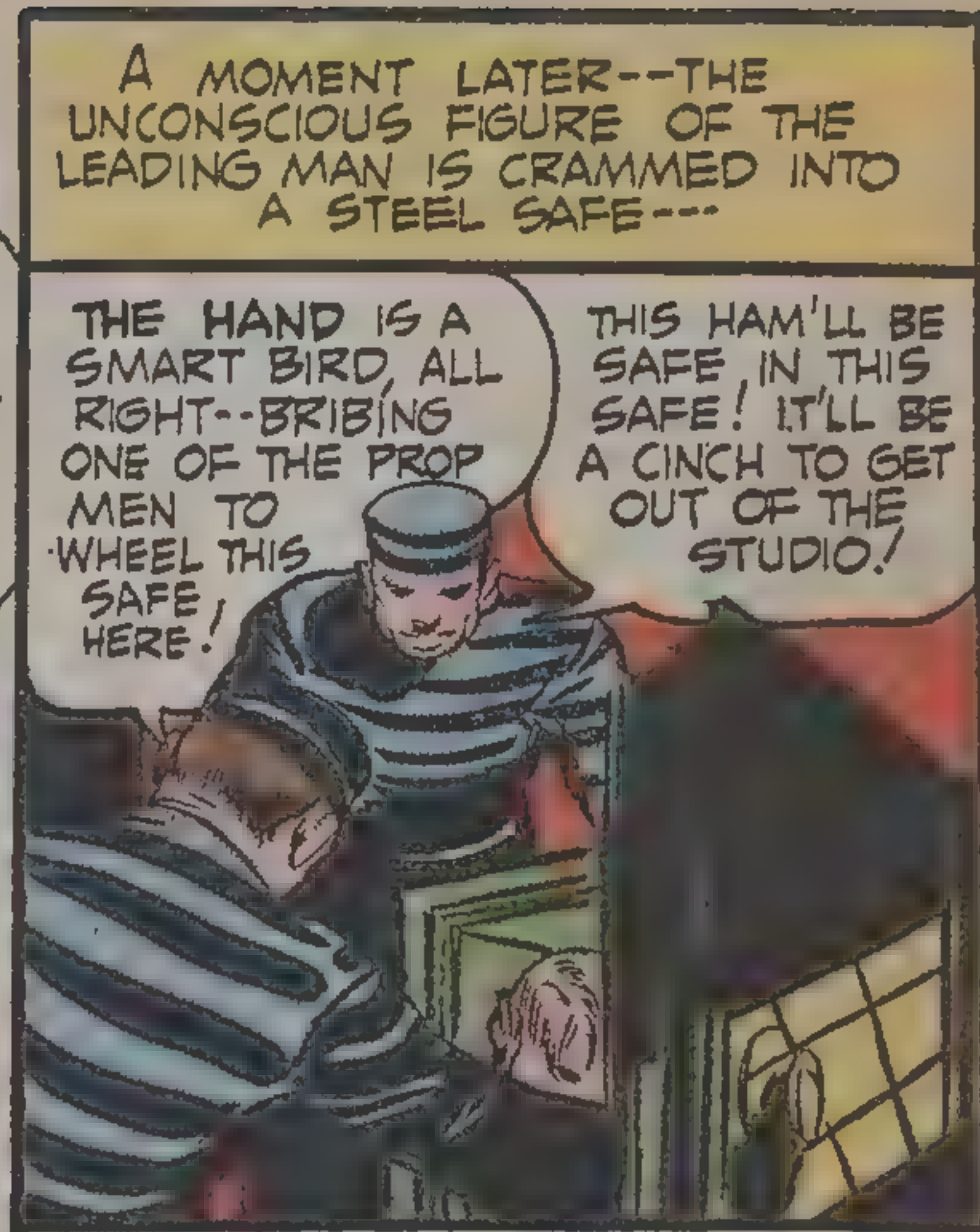
PERFECT TEAM-WORK, NICK! NOW LET'S PULL THE SWITCHEROO!

SUDDENLY THE FOUR OUTLAWS SHED THEIR ATHLETES' UNIFORMS TO STAND REVEALED IN CONVICT'S APPAREL!

THIS REMINDS ME OF MY LAST STRETCH IN THE BIG HOUSE!



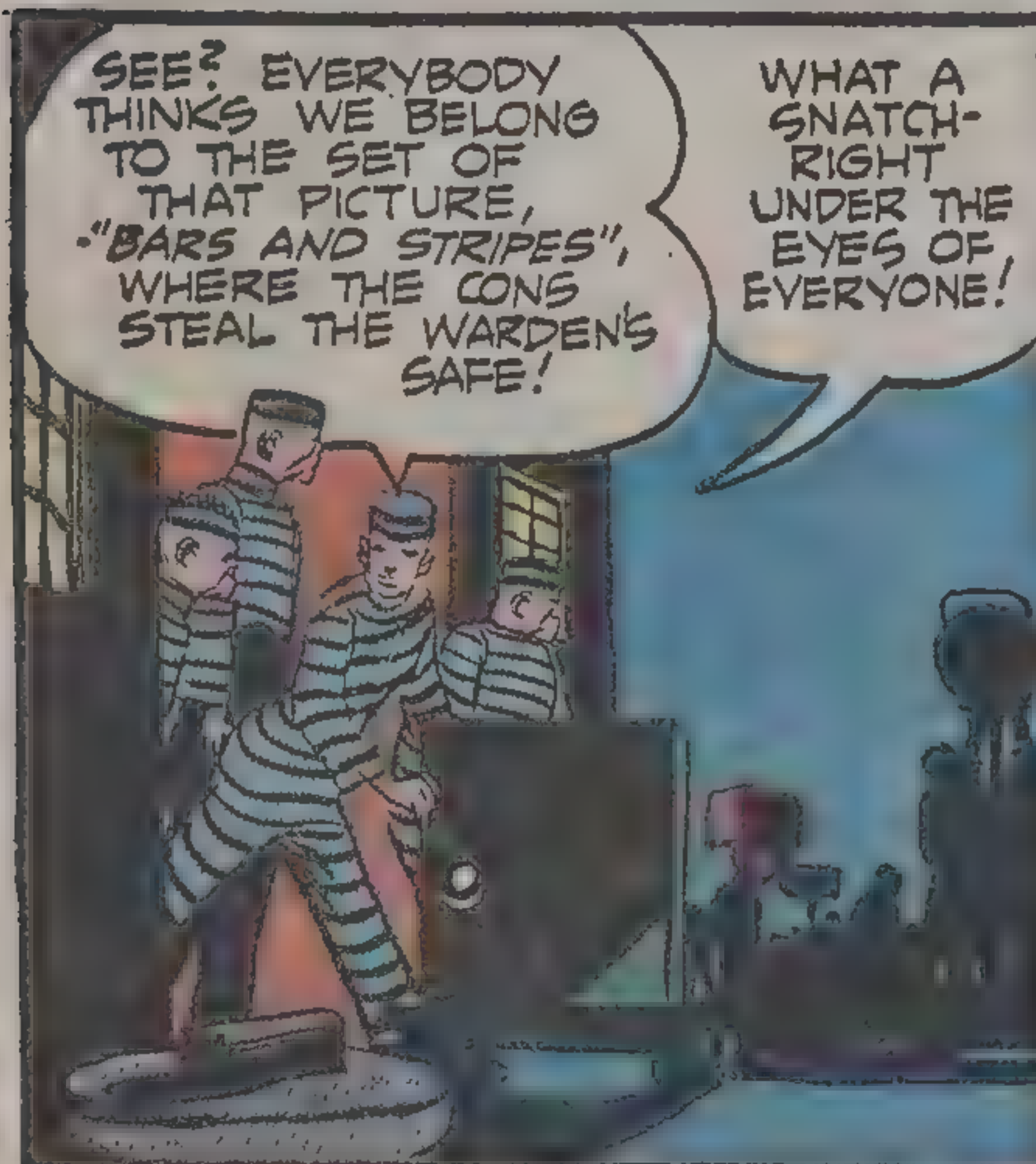
STOP WISE-CRACKIN! WE'VE GOT LOTS TO DO!



A MOMENT LATER--THE UNCONSCIOUS FIGURE OF THE LEADING MAN IS CRAMMED INTO A STEEL SAFE---

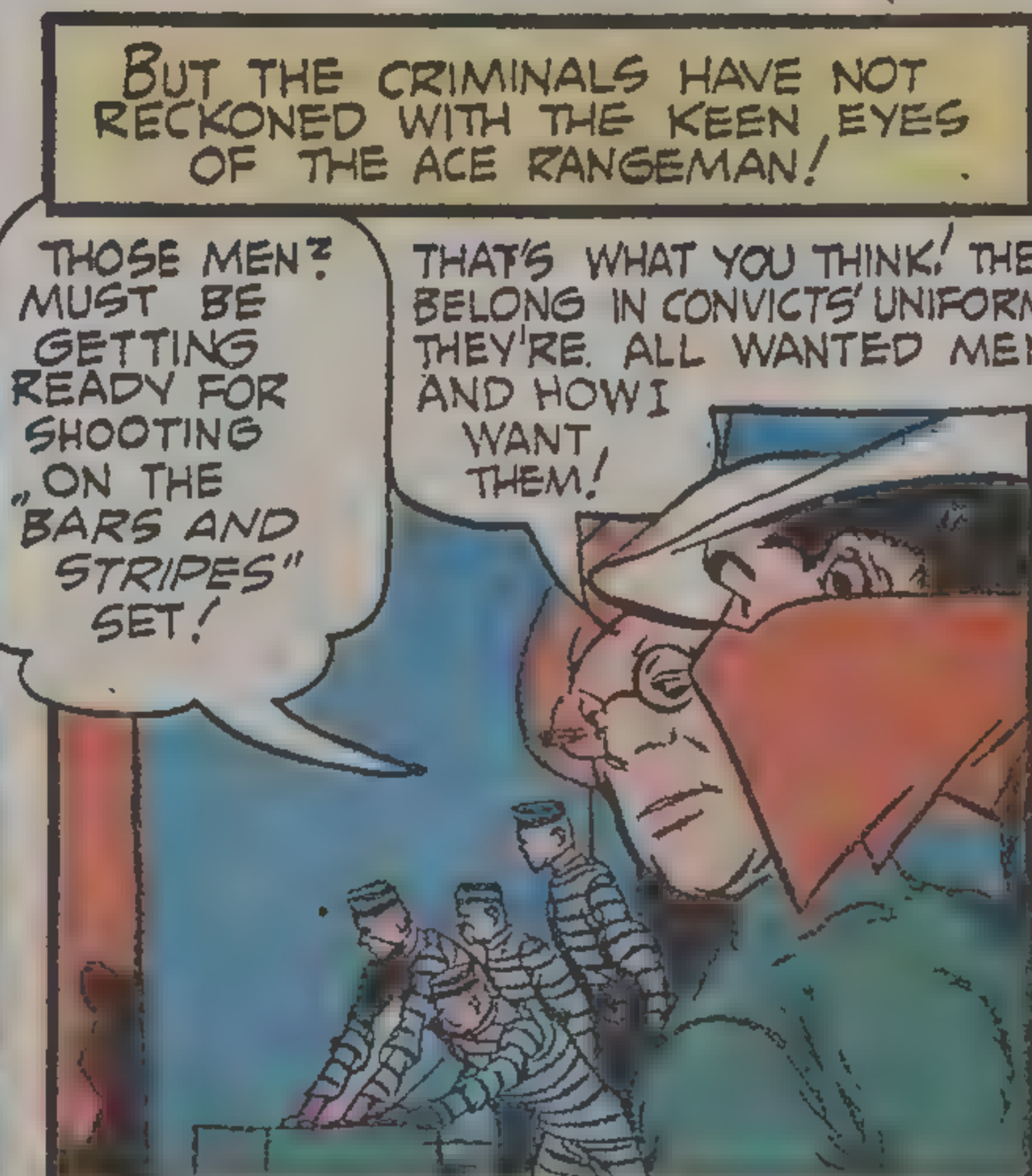
THE HAND IS A SMART BIRD, ALL RIGHT--BRIBING ONE OF THE PROP MEN TO WHEEL THIS SAFE HERE!

THIS HAM'LL BE SAFE IN THIS SAFE! IT'LL BE A CINCH TO GET OUT OF THE STUDIO!



SEE? EVERYBODY THINKS WE BELONG TO THE SET OF THAT PICTURE, "BARS AND STRIPES", WHERE THE CONS STEAL THE WARDEN'S SAFE!

WHAT A SNATCH-RIGHT UNDER THE EYES OF EVERYONE!



BUT THE CRIMINALS HAVE NOT RECKONED WITH THE KEEN EYES OF THE ACE RANGEMAN!

THOSE MEN? MUST BE GETTING READY FOR SHOOTING "ON THE BARS AND STRIPES" SET!

THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK! THEY BELONG IN CONVICTS' UNIFORMS. THEY'RE ALL WANTED MEN! AND HOW I WANT THEM!



THERE'S A REWARD OUT FOR YOU--HERE IT IS!

IT'S THE VIGILANTE!

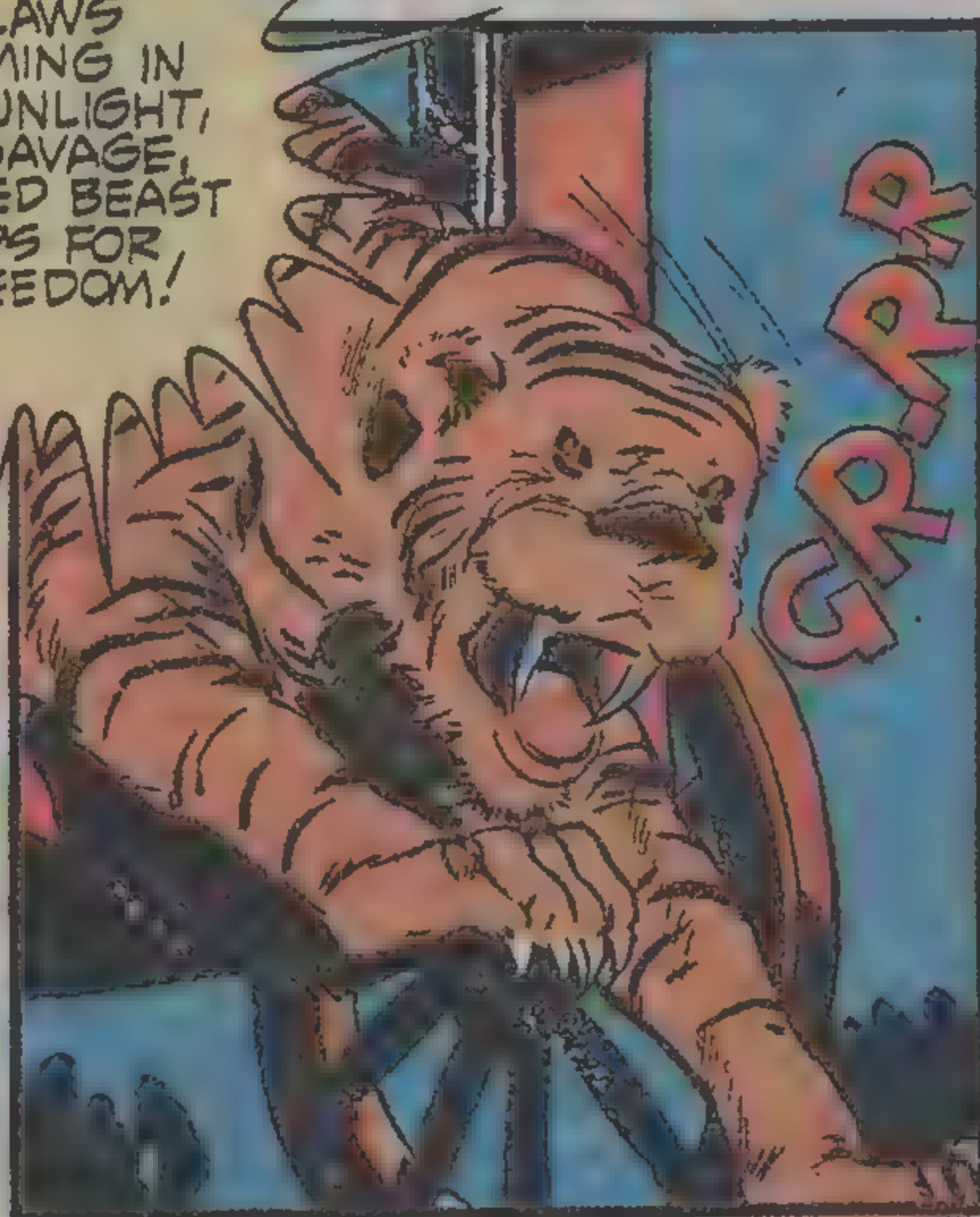
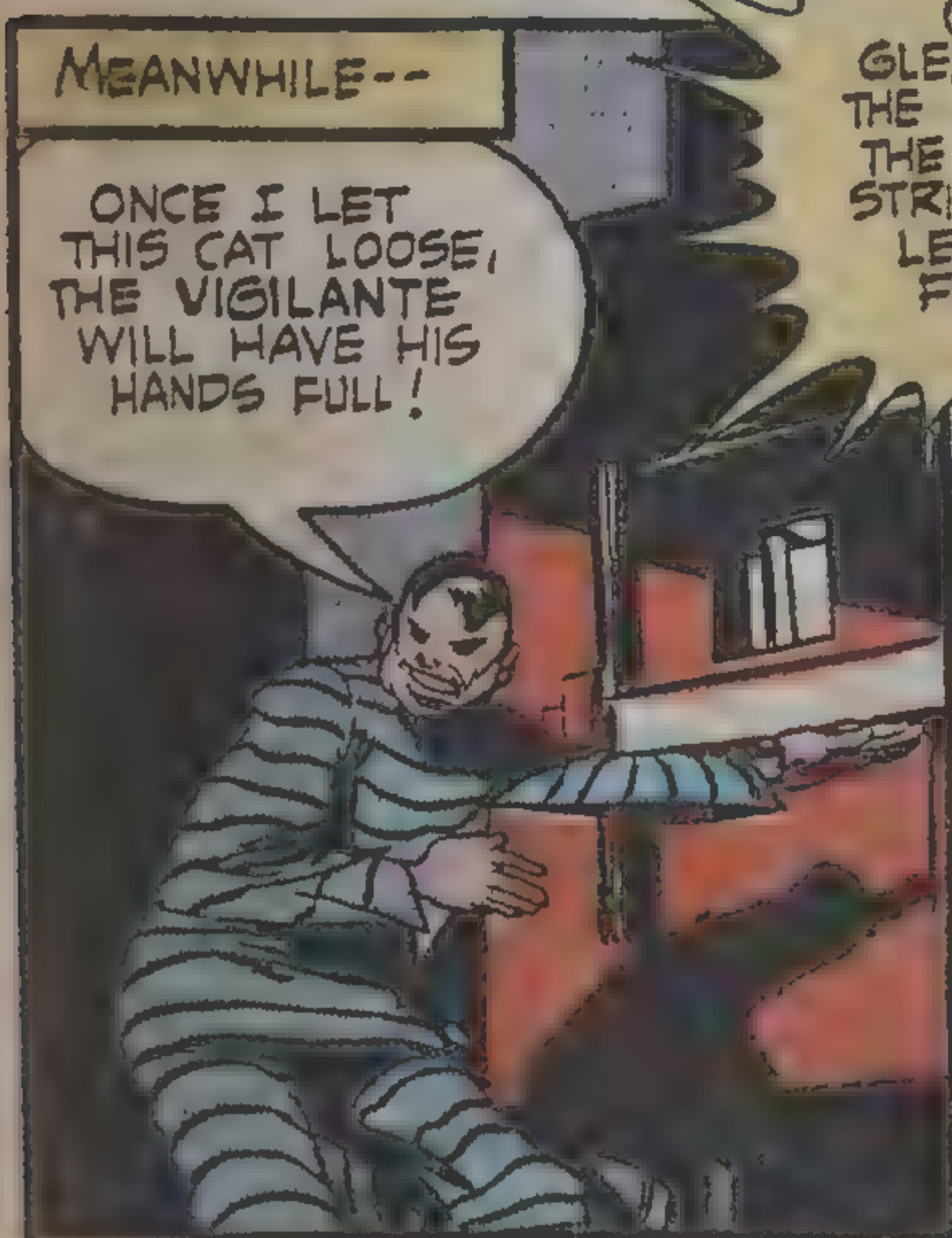
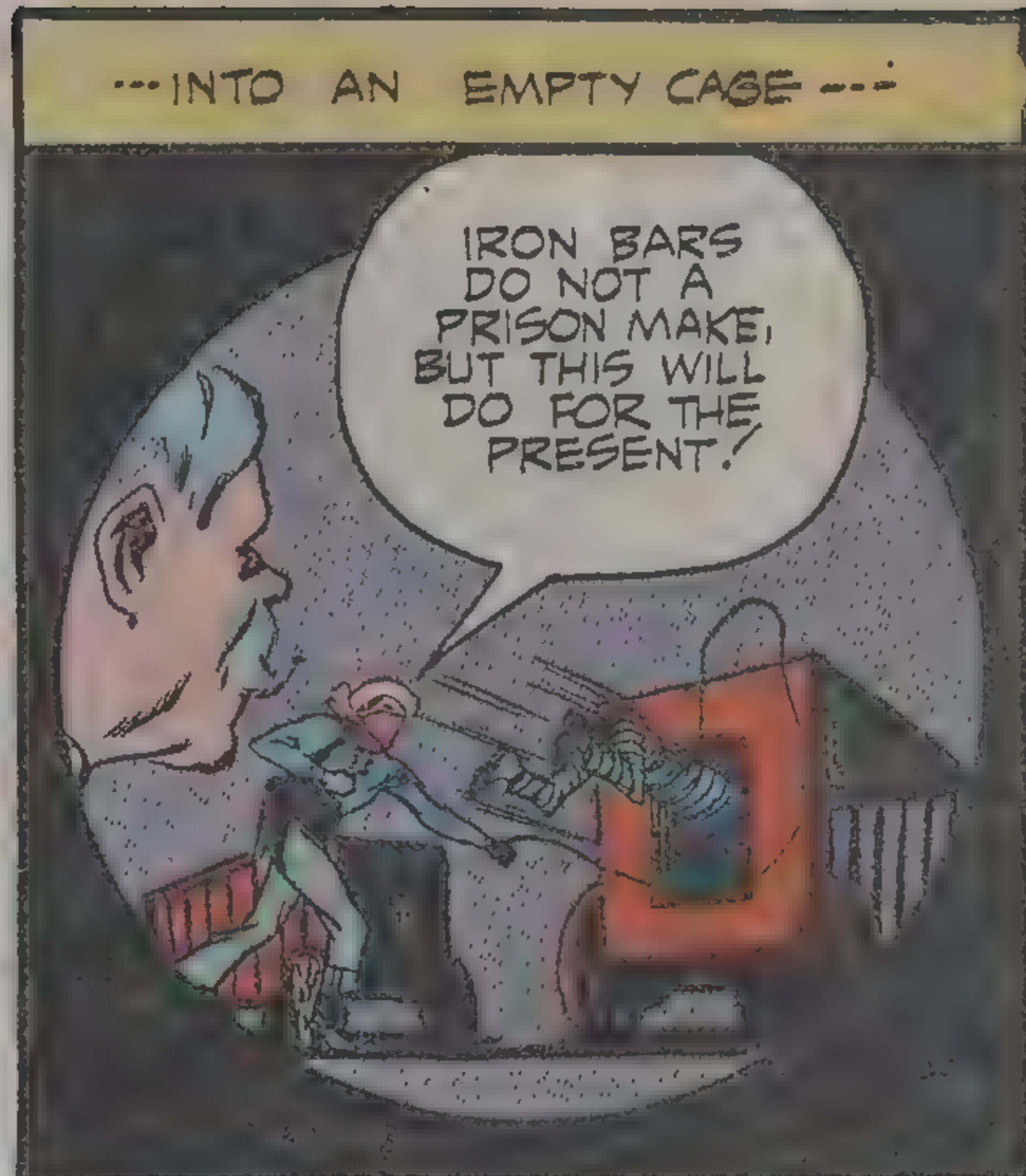
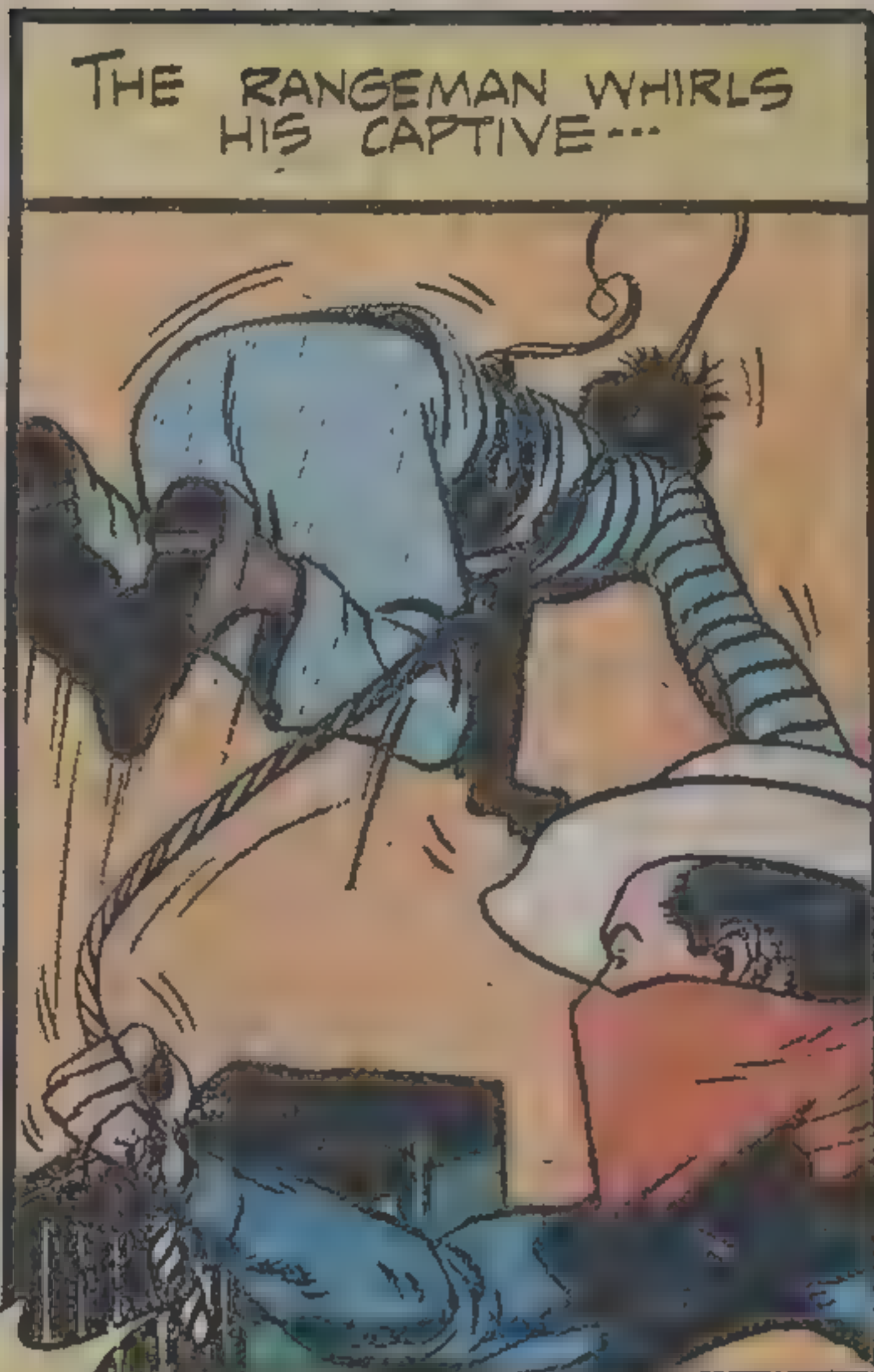


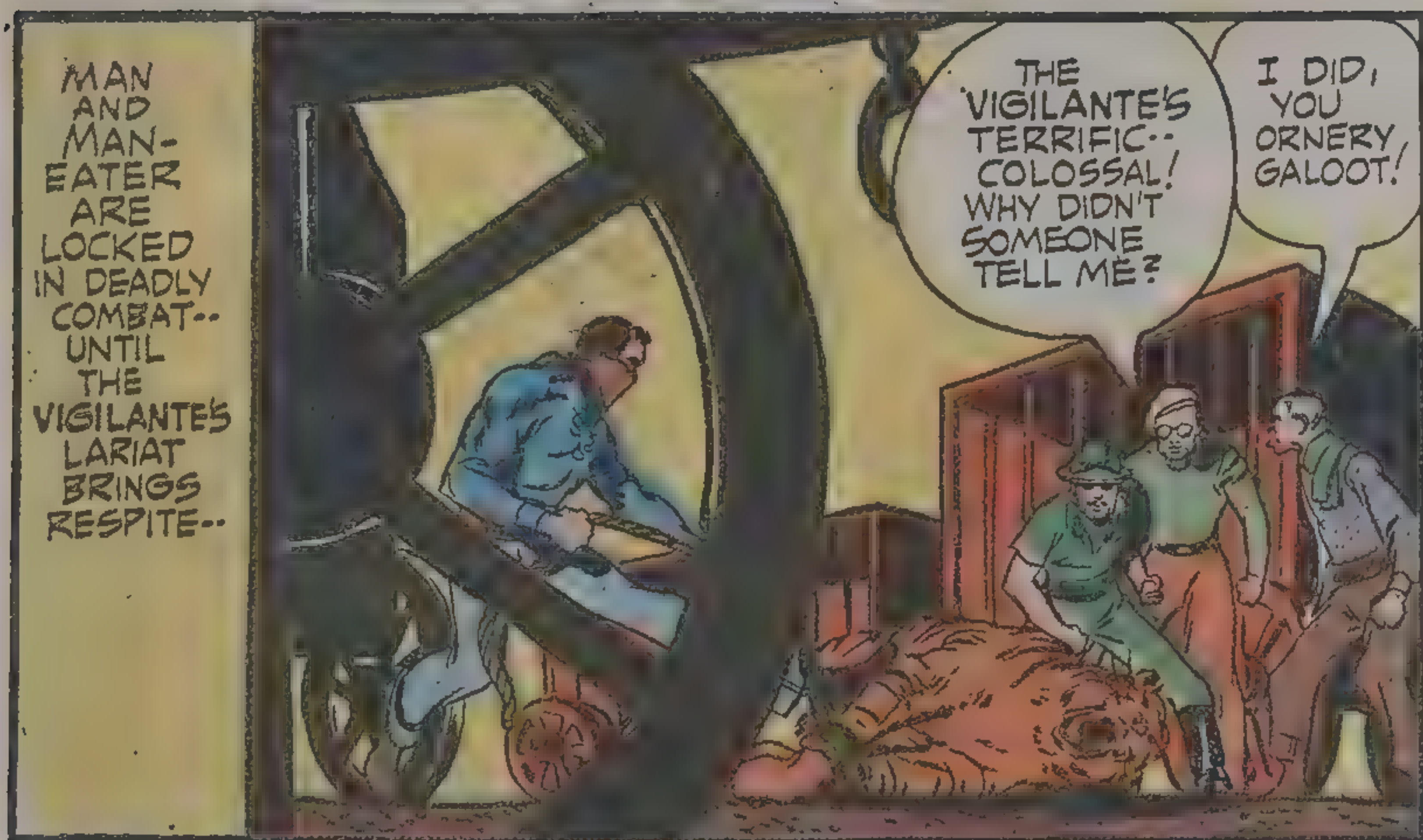
I BELIEVE IN SAFE-TY FIRST!

I SHOULDA STAYED IN THE PEN!



OH-OH! ONE OF THE THUGS IS TRYING TO DUCK OUT! A LITTLE ROPING SEEMS TO BE IN ORDER!

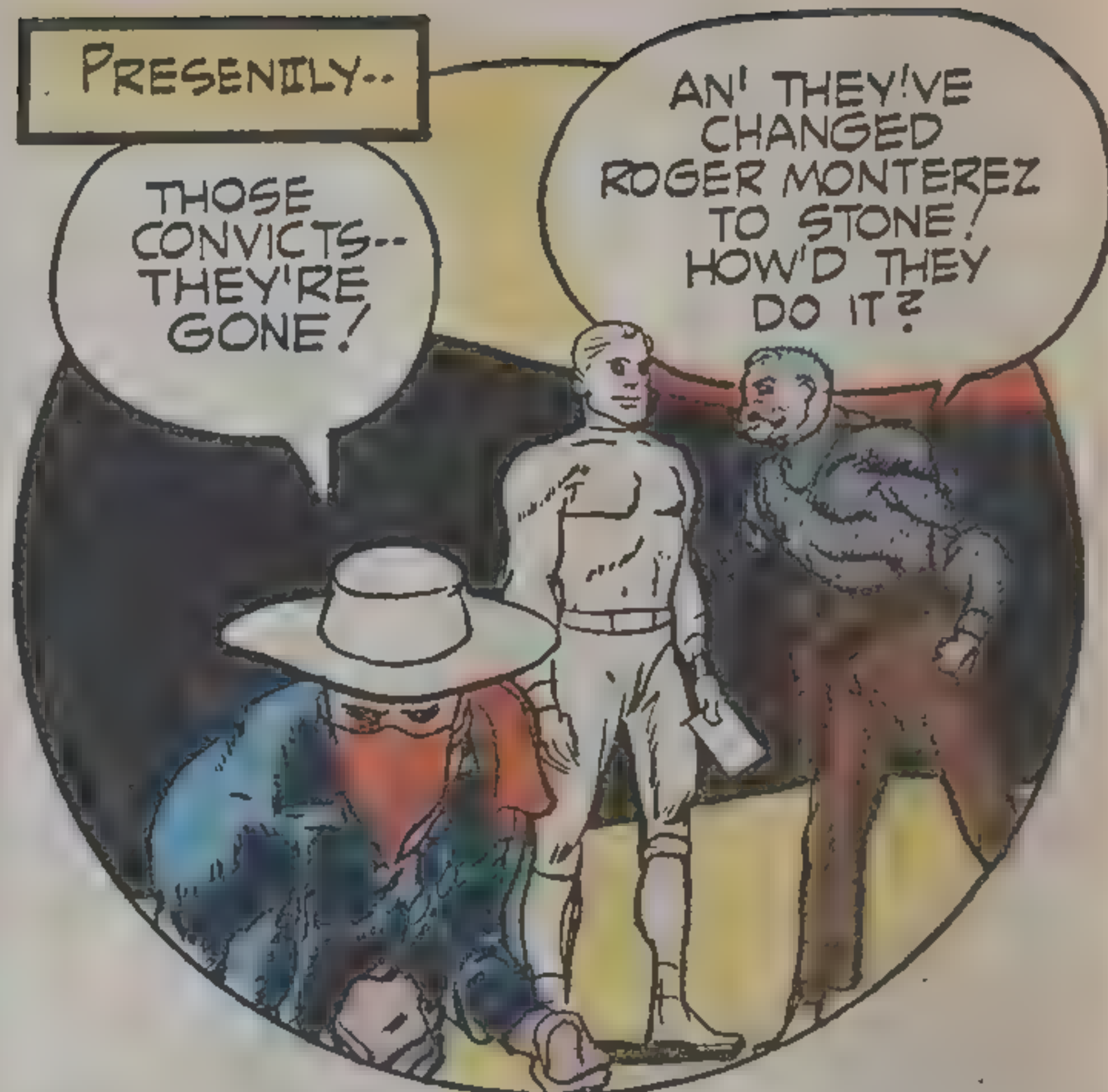




MAN AND MAN-EATER ARE LOCKED IN DEADLY COMBAT-- UNTIL THE VIGILANTE'S LARIAT BRINGS RESPITE--

THE VIGILANTE'S TERRIFIC-- COLOSSAL! WHY DIDN'T SOMEONE TELL ME?

I DID, YOU ORNERY GALLOOT!



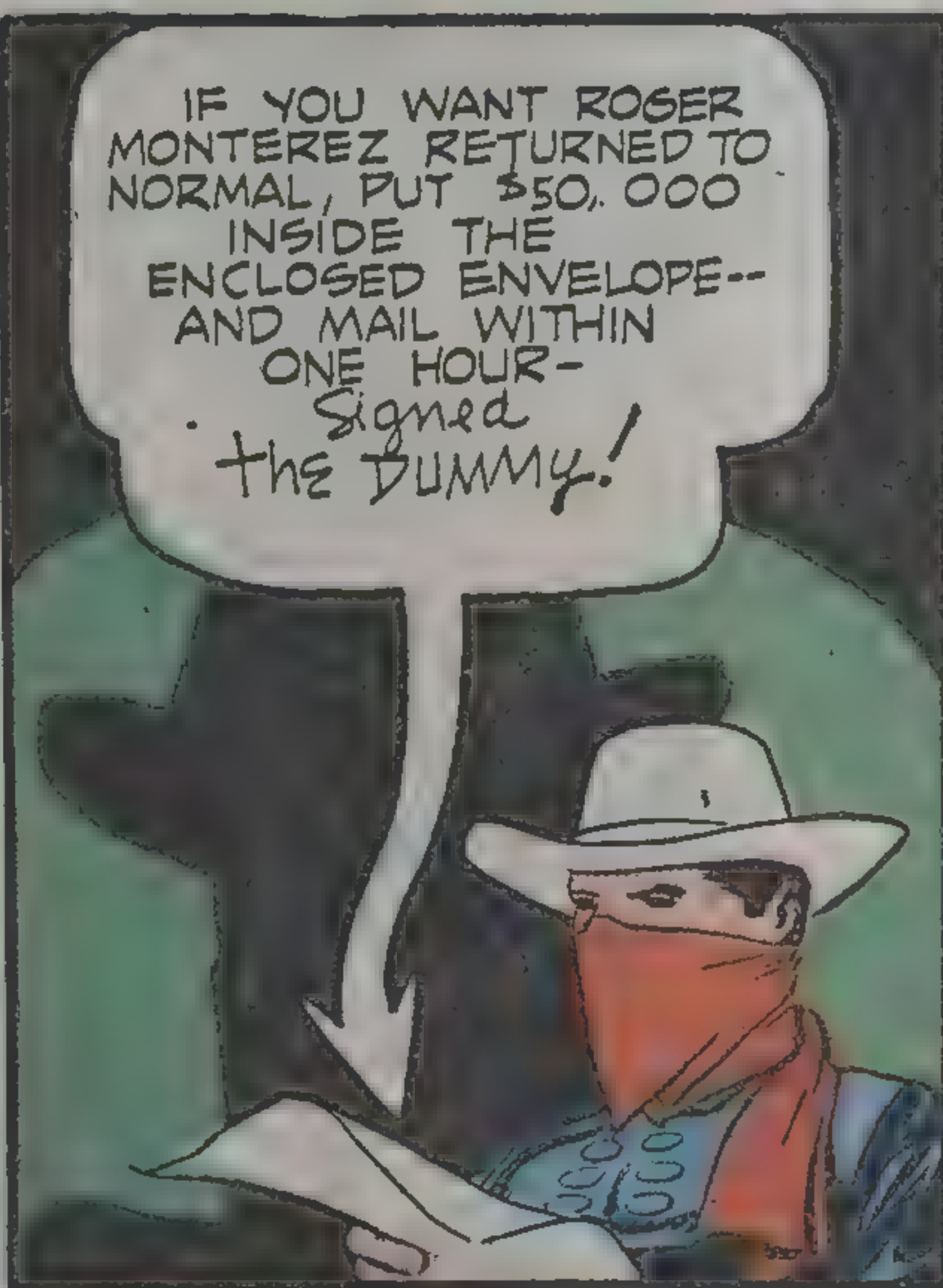
PRESENTLY--

THOSE CONVICTS-- THEY'RE GONE!

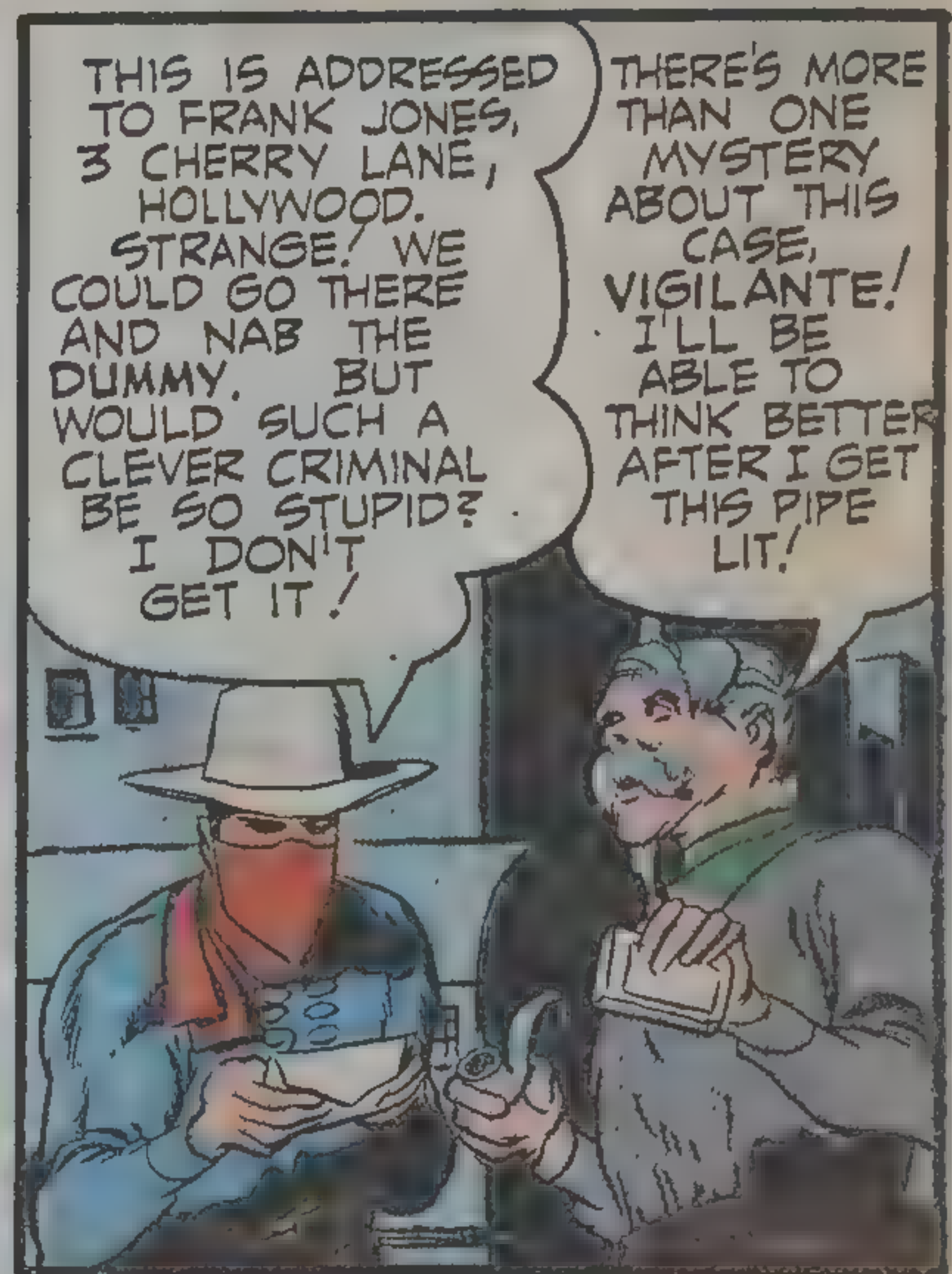
AN! THEY'VE CHANGED ROGER MONTEREZ TO STONE! HOW'D THEY DO IT?



AN ENVELOPE FROM THE DUMMY, I BET. I WONDER WHAT'S INSIDE?

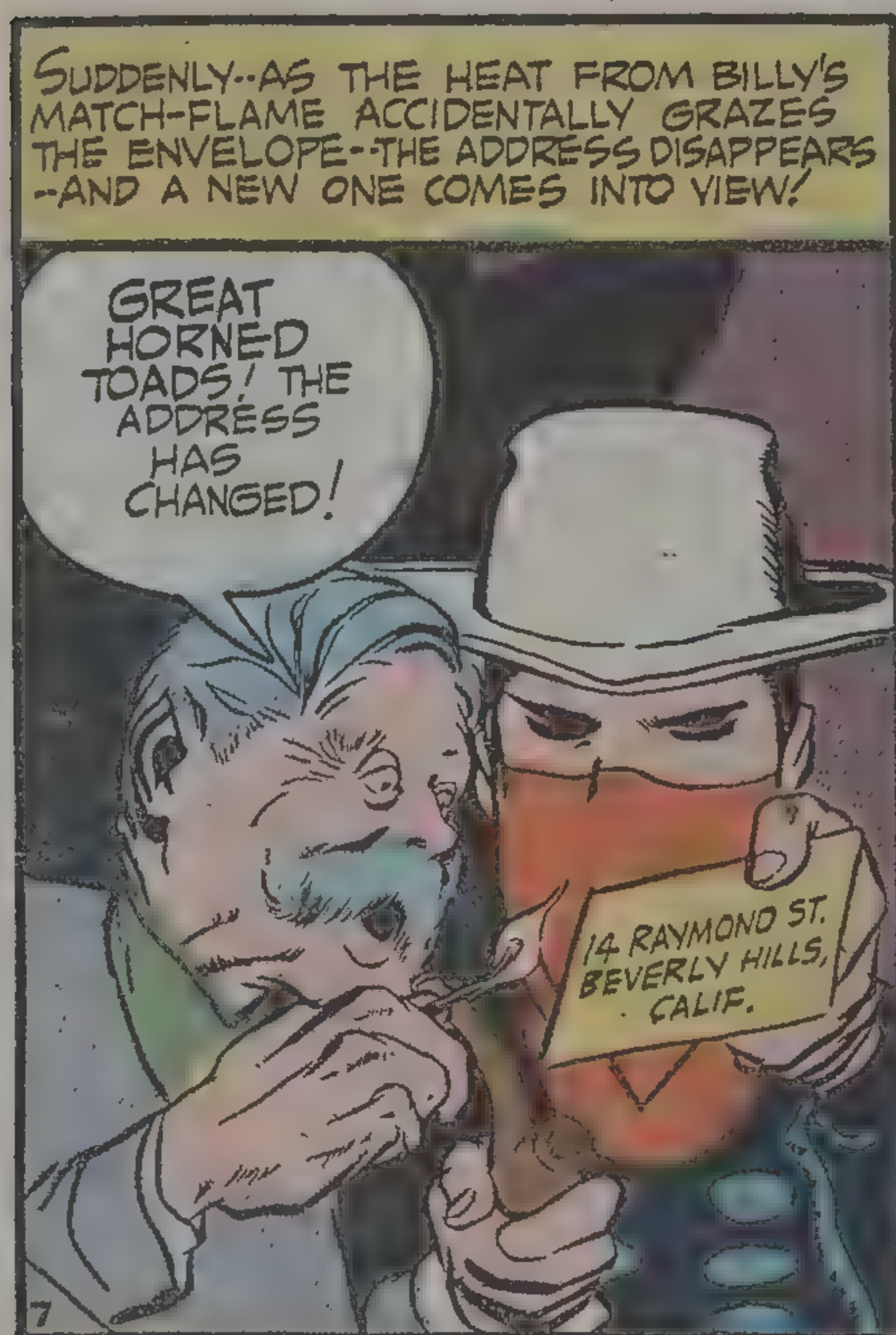


IF YOU WANT ROGER MONTEREZ RETURNED TO NORMAL, PUT \$50,000 INSIDE THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE-- AND MAIL WITHIN ONE HOUR--
Signed
The DUMMY!



THIS IS ADDRESSED TO FRANK JONES, 3 CHERRY LANE, HOLLYWOOD. STRANGE! WE COULD GO THERE AND NAB THE DUMMY. BUT WOULD SUCH A CLEVER CRIMINAL BE SO STUPID? I DON'T GET IT!

THERE'S MORE THAN ONE MYSTERY ABOUT THIS CASE, VIGILANTE! I'LL BE ABLE TO THINK BETTER AFTER I GET THIS PIPE LIT!

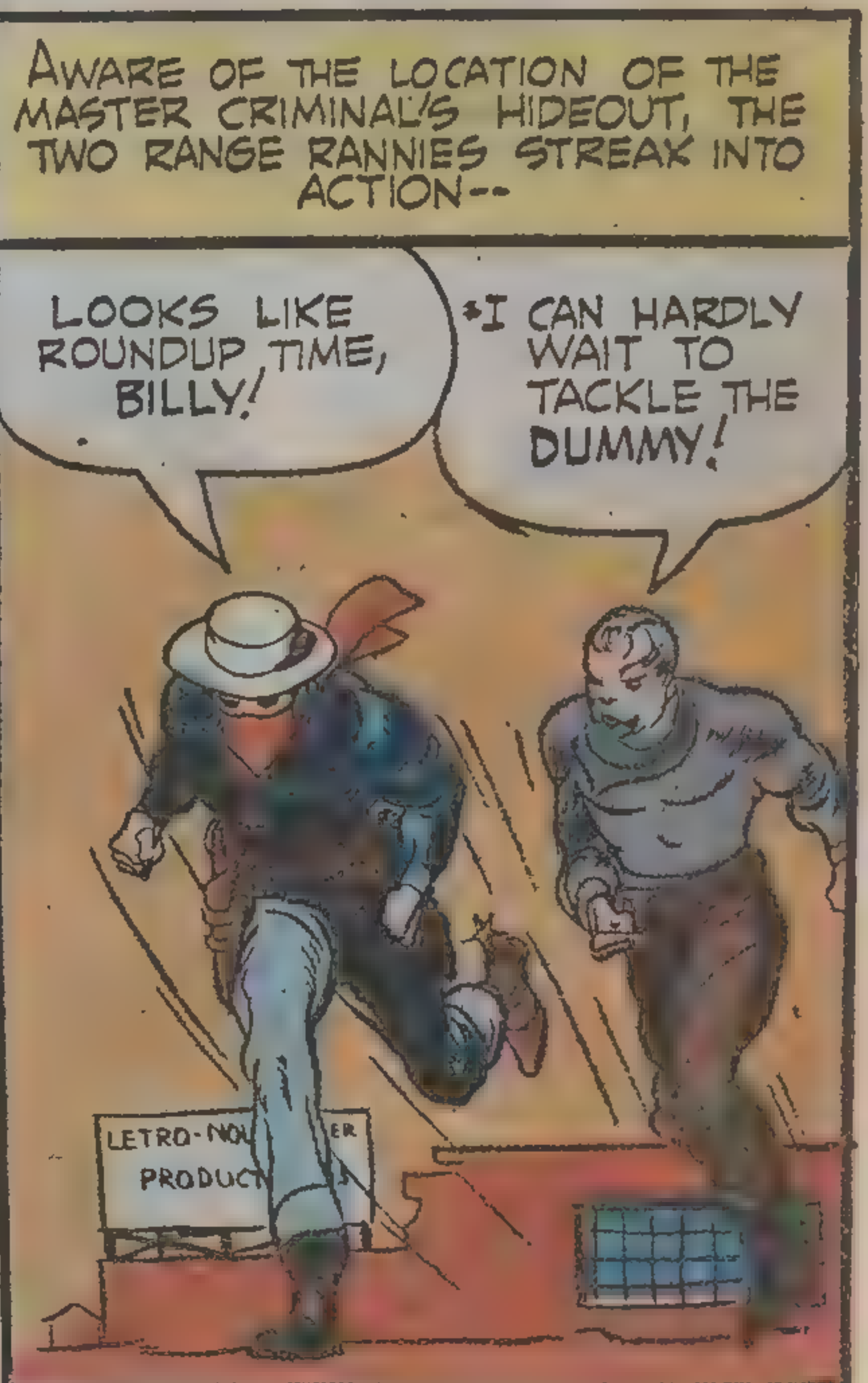


SUDDENLY--AS THE HEAT FROM BILLY'S MATCH-FLAME ACCIDENTALLY GRAZES THE ENVELOPE--THE ADDRESS DISAPPEARS--AND A NEW ONE COMES INTO VIEW!

GREAT HORNED TOADS! THE ADDRESS HAS CHANGED!

GREAT WORK, POP! THIS EXPLAINS IT. THE DUMMY WANTED THE MONEY PUT IN HIS ENVELOPE-- AND MAILED WITHIN AN HOUR. THE REAL ADDRESS WAS WRITTEN IN INK THAT WOULD COME OUT AFTER AN HOUR--

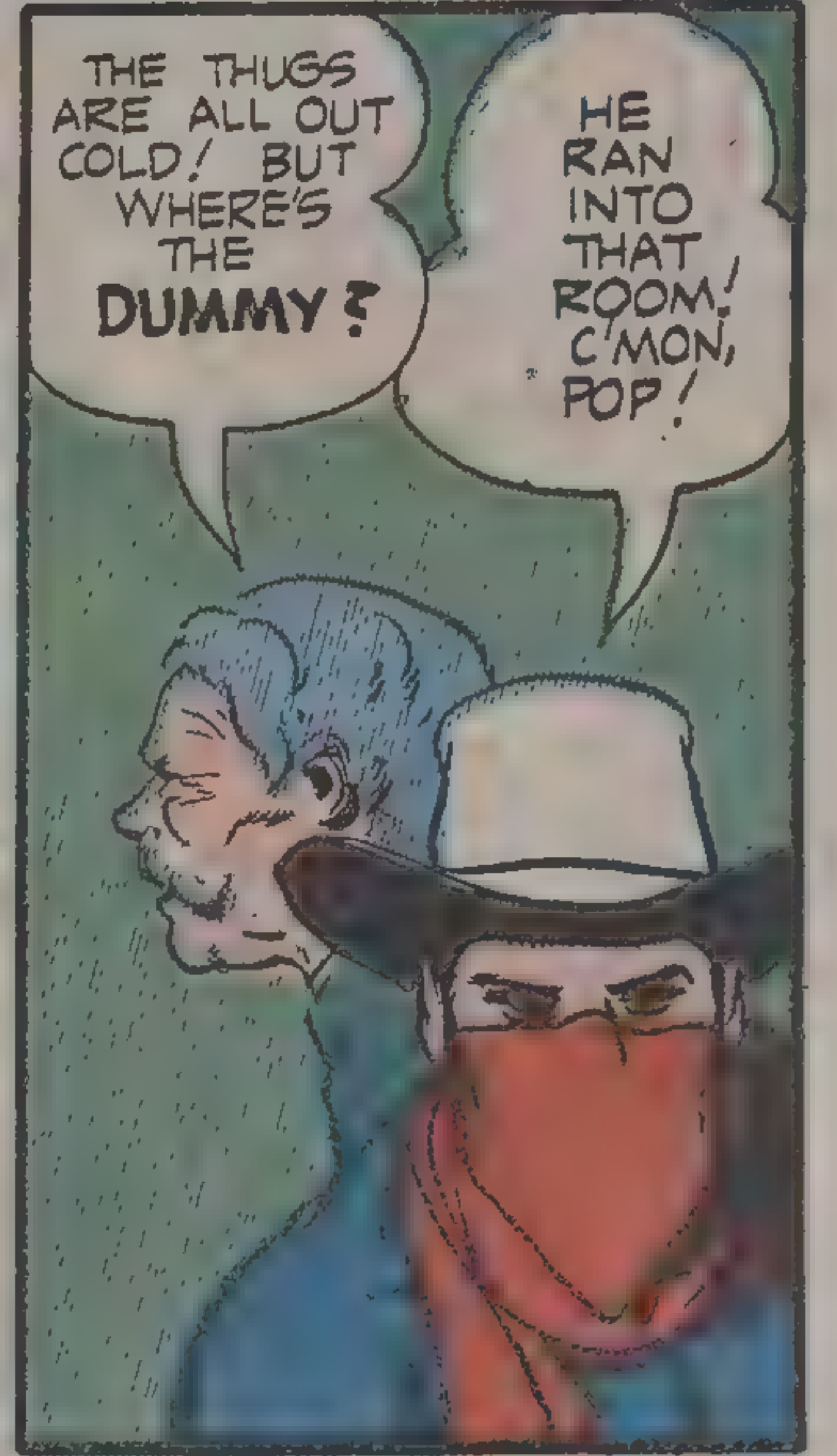
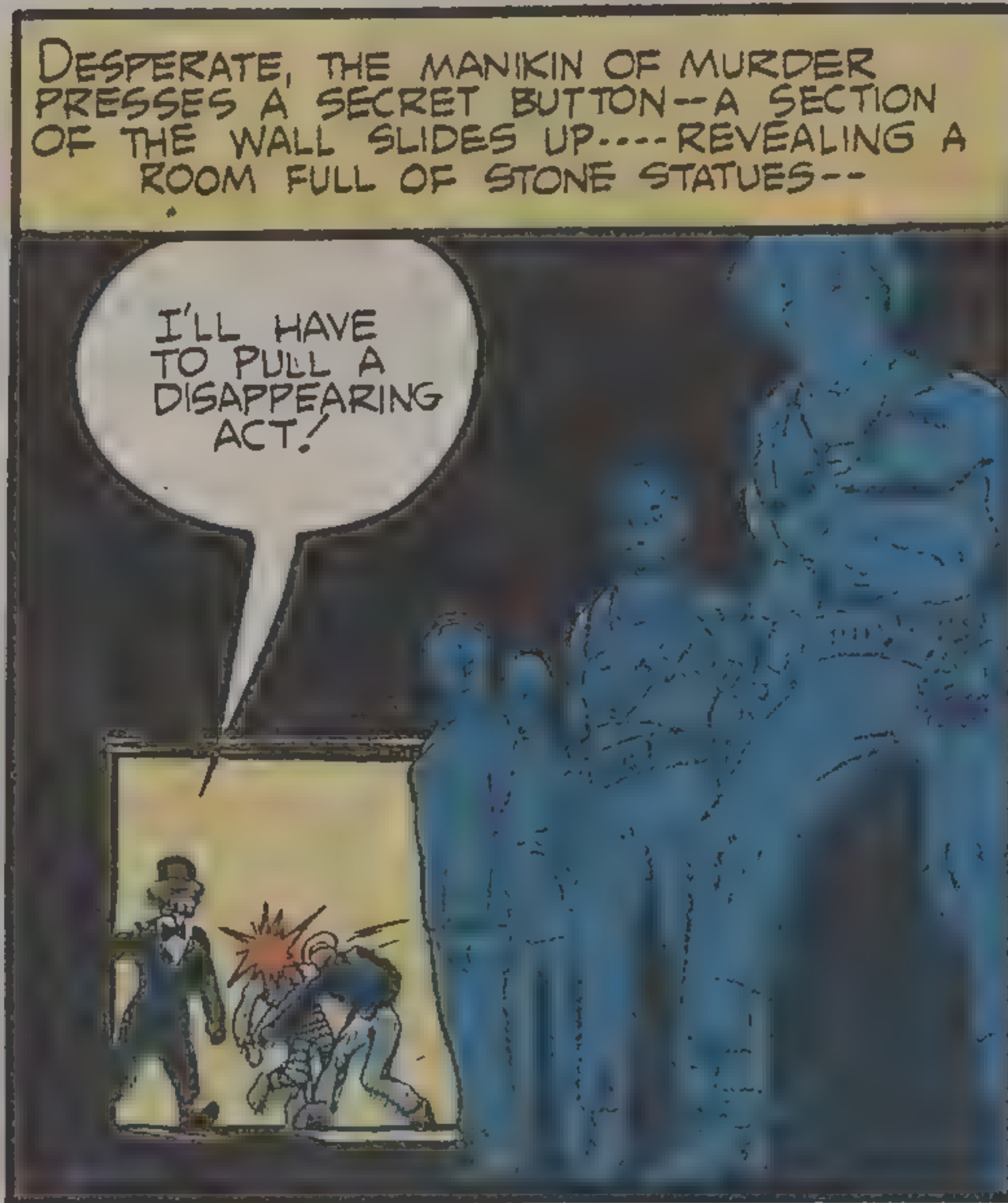
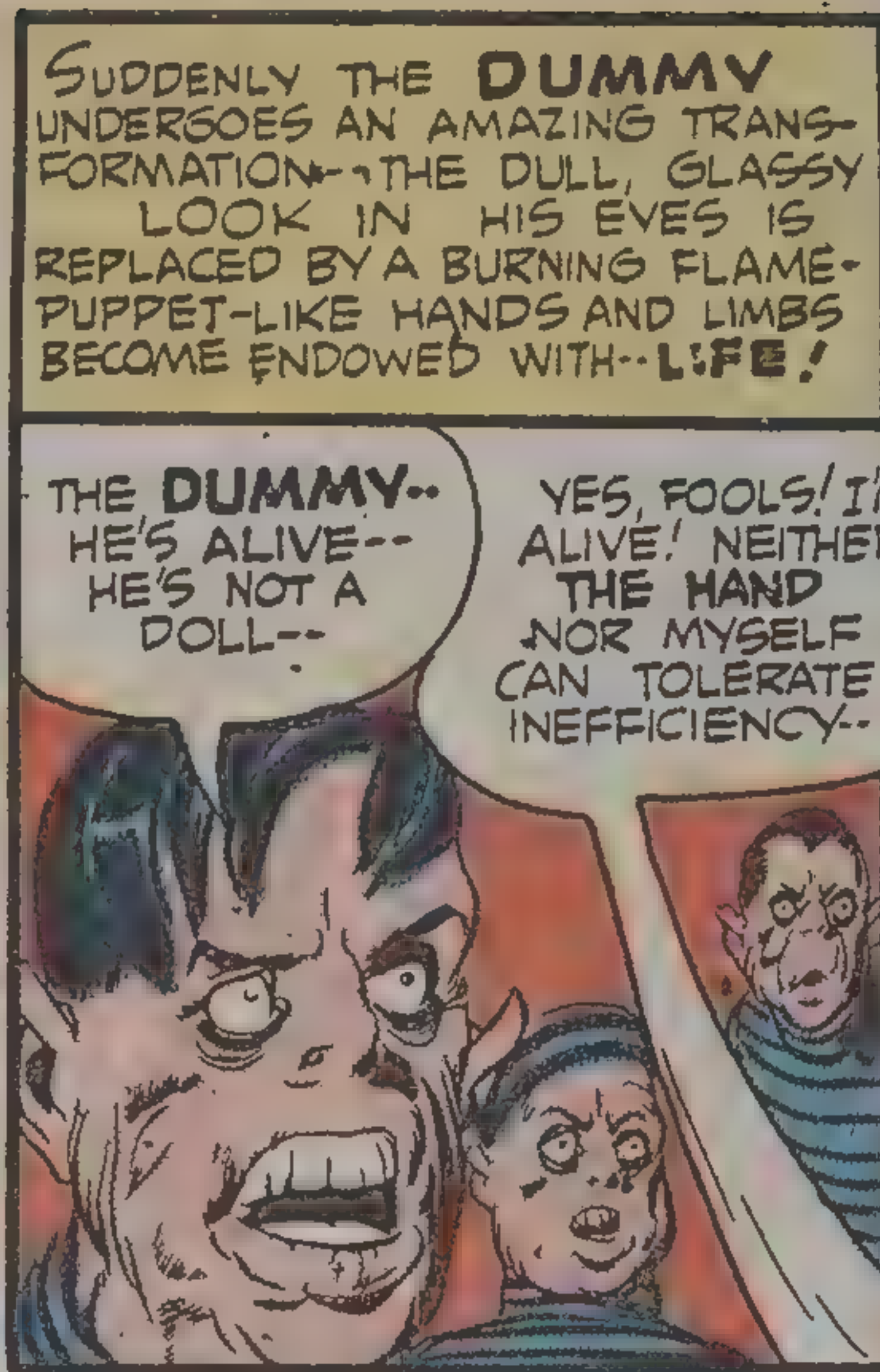
BUT THE HEAT FROM MY MATCH BROUGHT OUT THE REAL ADDRESS! WOW!



LOOKS LIKE ROUNDUP TIME, BILLY!

*I CAN HARDLY WAIT TO TACKLE THE DUMMY!

LETRO-NOL PRODUCT





THE DUMMY MUST HAVE DUCKED OUT- NOTHING IN HERE BUT STATUES!

GOLLY, SON, YOU'RE RIGHT! THERE'S TWO THAT LOOK LIKE YOU N' ME!



BUT BEHIND THE STATUE OF THE VIGILANTE STANDS THE DUMMY...

I'LL PLUG 'IM RIGHT BETWEEN THE EYES! YEAH, RIGHT BETWEEN THE EYES!



POP SEES!

VIGILANTE... WATCH OUT!



BUT A SPLIT SECOND BEFORE THE GUN CRACKS OUT, THE RANGE-FIGHTER STEPS SIDWARDS, SENDS THE LINE OF STATUES BESIDE HIM CRASHING TO THE GROUND!

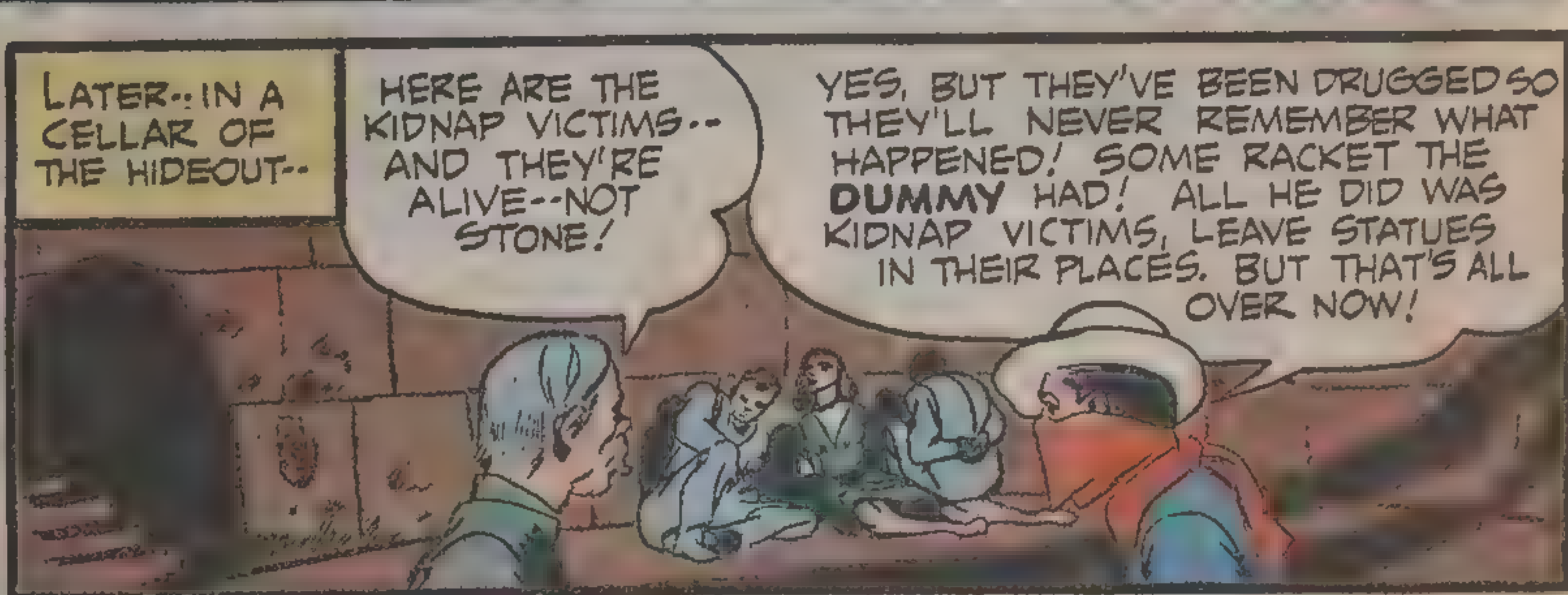
THAT TAKES CARE OF THE DUMMY!

HALP!



WHAT'S SO FUNNY, POP?

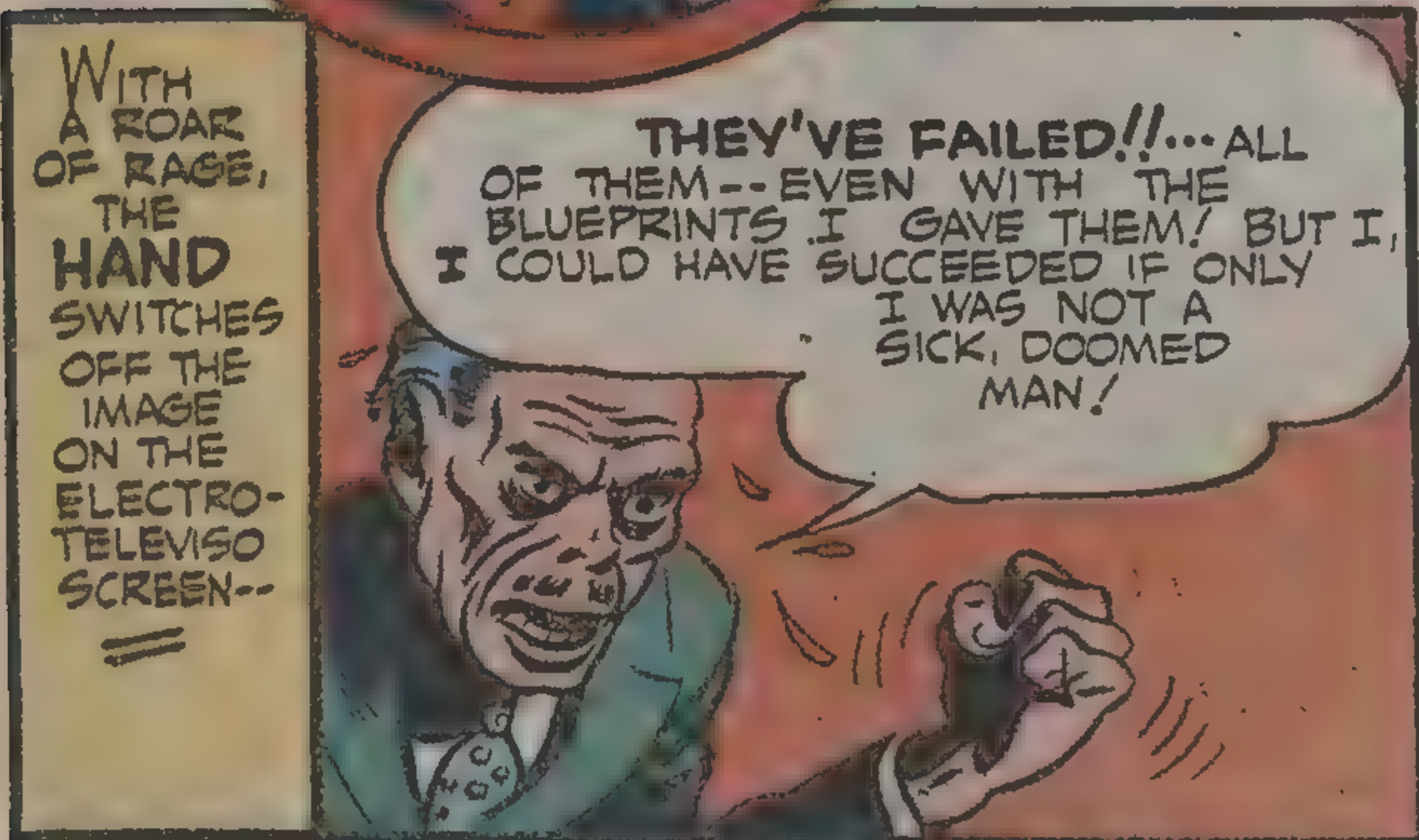
HA! HA!--FIRST TIME A STATUE EVER CAUGHT A CROOK!



LATER..IN A CELLAR OF THE HIDEOUT--

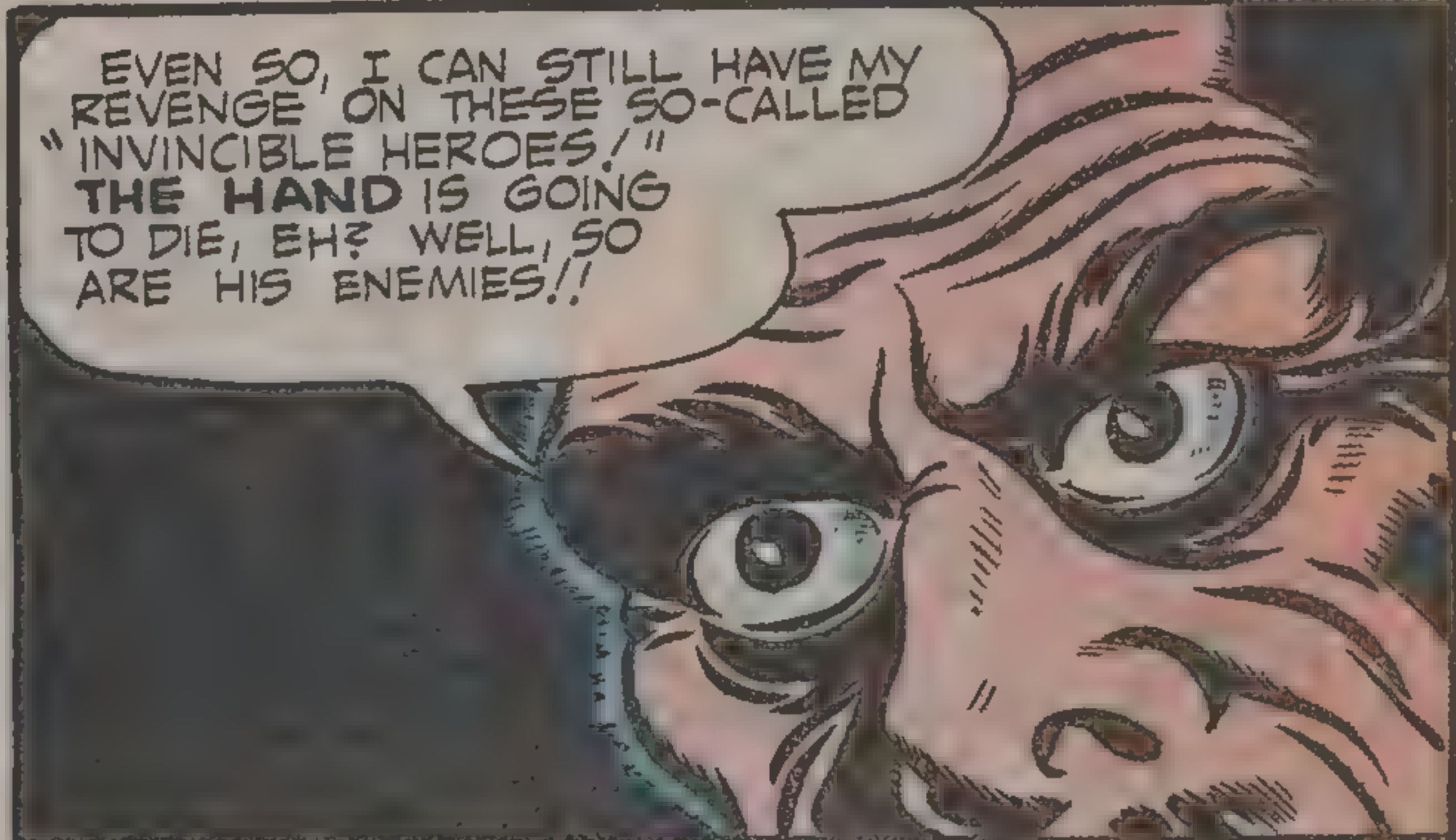
HERE ARE THE KIDNAP VICTIMS-- AND THEY'RE ALIVE--NOT STONE!

YES, BUT THEY'VE BEEN DRUGGED SO THEY'LL NEVER REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED! SOME RACKET THE DUMMY HAD! ALL HE DID WAS KIDNAP VICTIMS, LEAVE STATUES IN THEIR PLACES. BUT THAT'S ALL OVER NOW!



WITH A ROAR OF RAGE, THE HAND SWITCHES OFF THE IMAGE ON THE ELECTRO-TELEVISIO SCREEN--

THEY'VE FAILED!!...ALL OF THEM--EVEN WITH THE BLUEPRINTS I GAVE THEM! BUT I, I COULD HAVE SUCCEEDED IF ONLY I WAS NOT A SICK, DOOMED MAN!



EVEN SO, I CAN STILL HAVE MY REVENGE ON THESE SO-CALLED "INVINCIBLE HEROES!" THE HAND IS GOING TO DIE, EH? WELL, SO ARE HIS ENEMIES!!

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New York, N. Y.

Dear Sir:

Here are my favorite features in Leading Comics, listed in the order in which I like them:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

My Name.....

Address.....

City & State.....

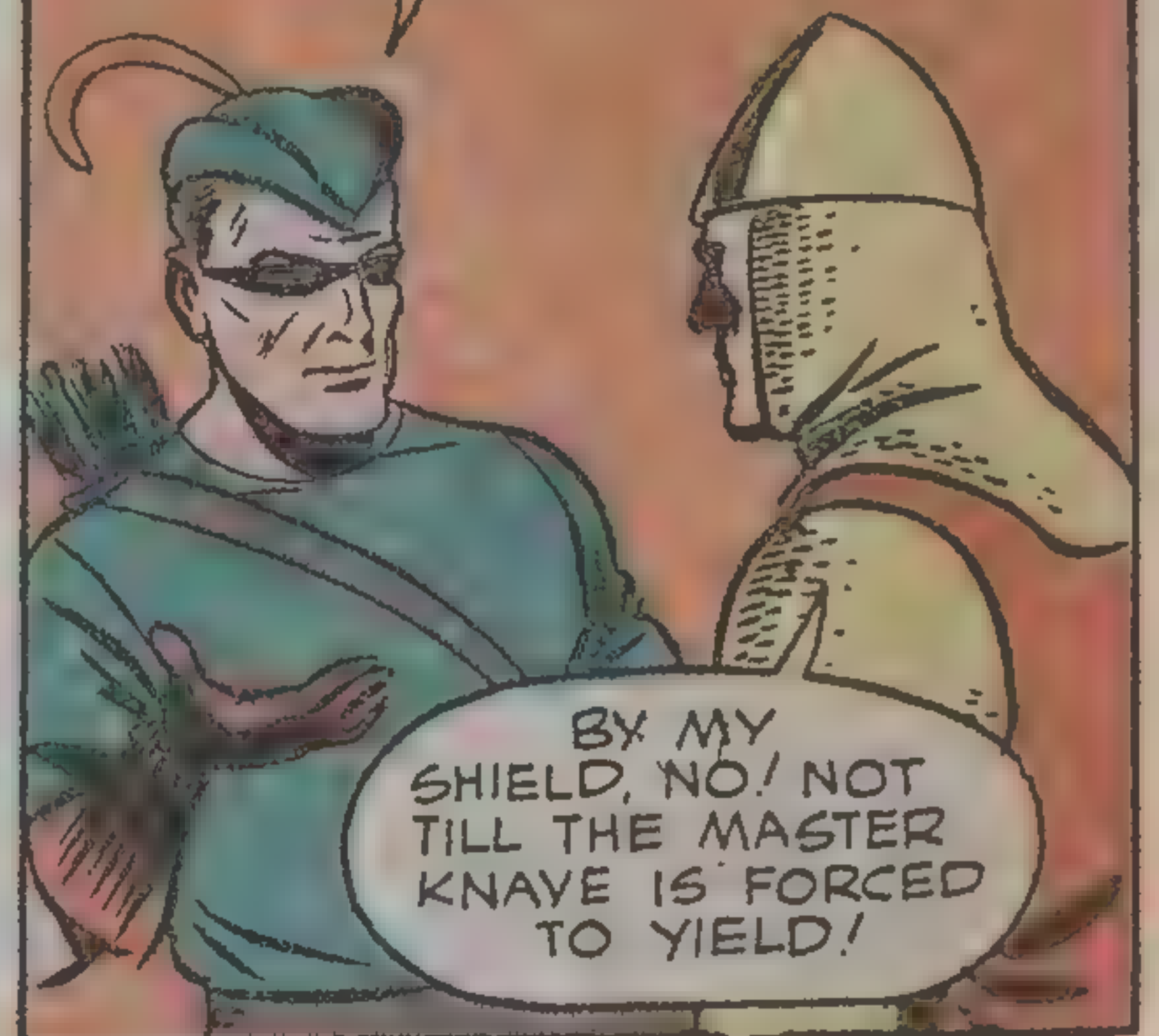
A WEEK HAS PASSED SINCE THE SEVEN INTREPID ADVENTURERS SALLIED FORTH ON THEIR SEPARATE MISSIONS--AND THEY MEET AGAIN, AS ARRANGED...

CONGRATULATIONS! HOLLYWOOD NEVER FILMED ANYTHING MORE EXCITING THAN THE JOB YOU DID ON THE DUMMY!

THAT WASN'T MUCH I CAME OVER TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON, TAKING BIG CAESAR OUT OF CIRCULATION!



WE KNOW THE HAND DIDN'T INTEND TO DO US ANY FAVORS! HE THOUGHT HE HAD PLANNED THE CRIMES SO WELL WE COULDN'T PREVENT THEM! I DON'T THINK OUR JOB IS FINISHED YET!



BY MY SHIELD, NO! NOT TILL THE MASTER KNAVE IS FORCED TO YIELD!

AN UNSEEN WITNESS OF THE MEETING IS THE HAND HIMSELF...

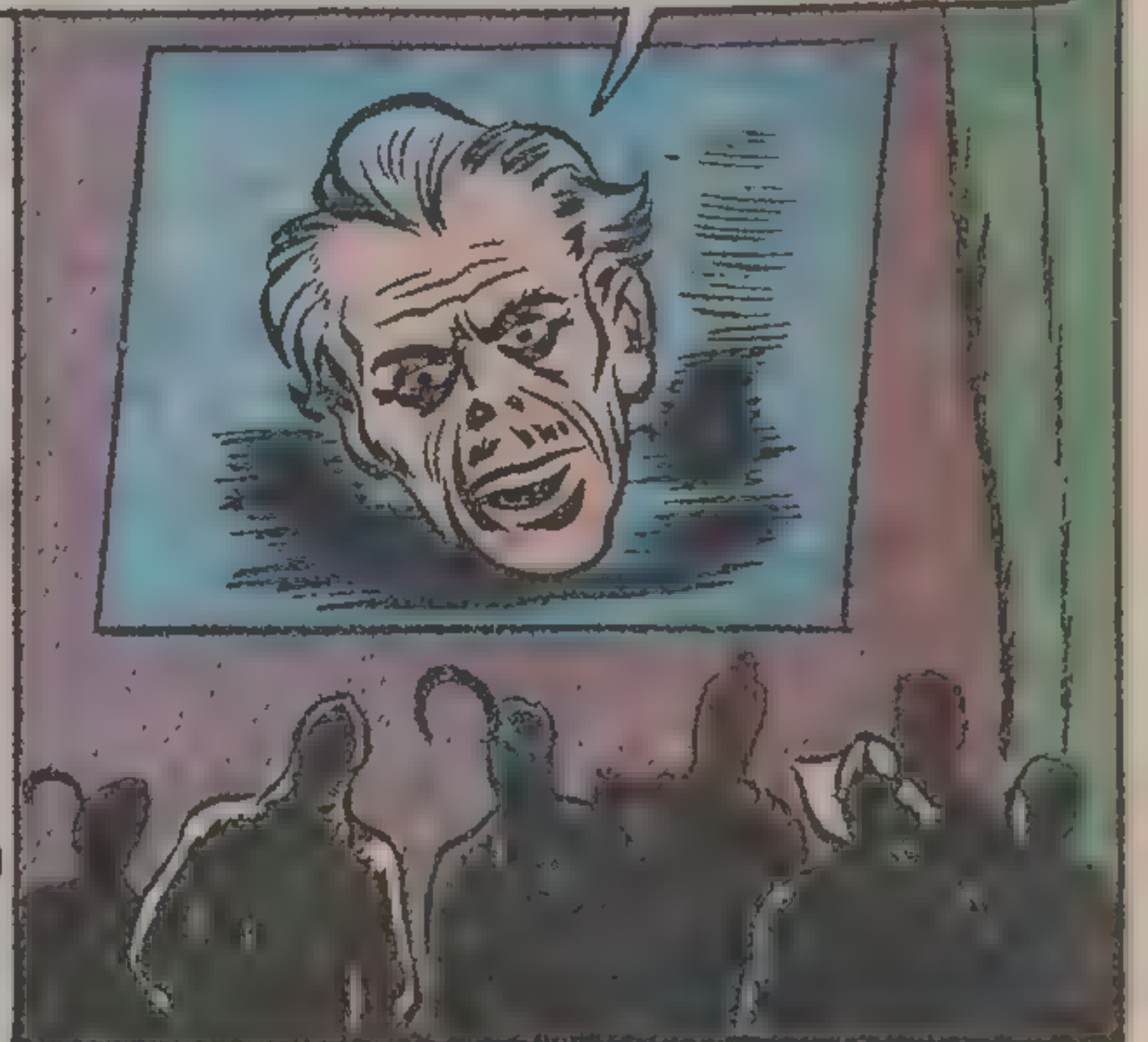
I SHOULD HAVE LET THOSE BLUNDERERS ROT IN PRISON! NOW THE WORLD WILL LAUGH AT ME FOR THE FAILURE OF MY SCHEMES!



BUT I CAN STILL HAVE THE LAST LAUGH BY CRUSHING THOSE SEVEN! THEY WON'T HAVE A CHANCE, FIGHTING ME IN MY OWN HOUSE!

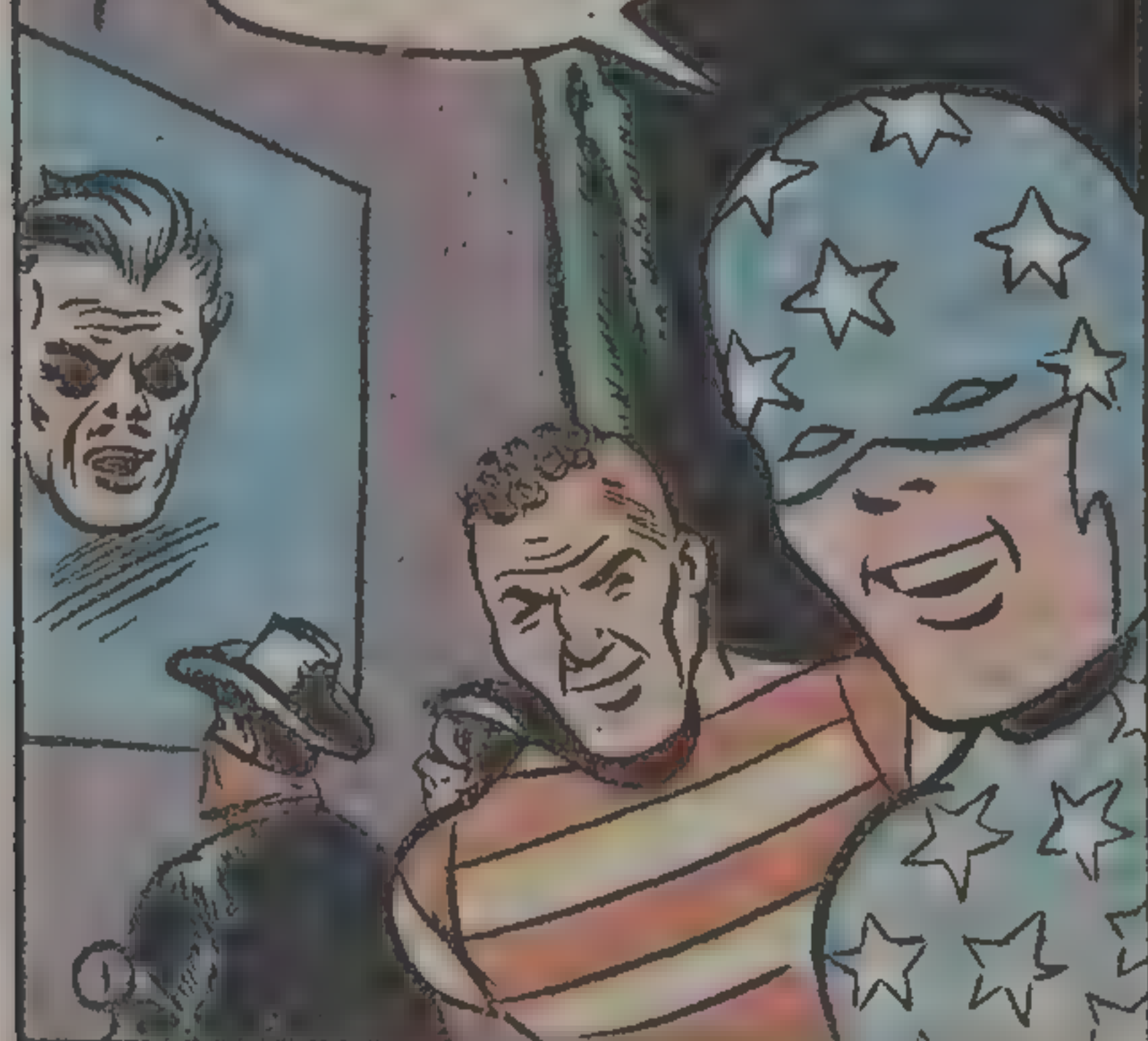
THE HAND JOINS THE MEETING-- BY REMOTE CONTROL!

YOU ARE FOOLS! BECAUSE YOU HAVE OUTWITTED MY FINGERS, YOU THINK YOU CAN DEFEAT THE HAND! VERY WELL, I SHALL PROVE THAT YOU ARE WRONG...



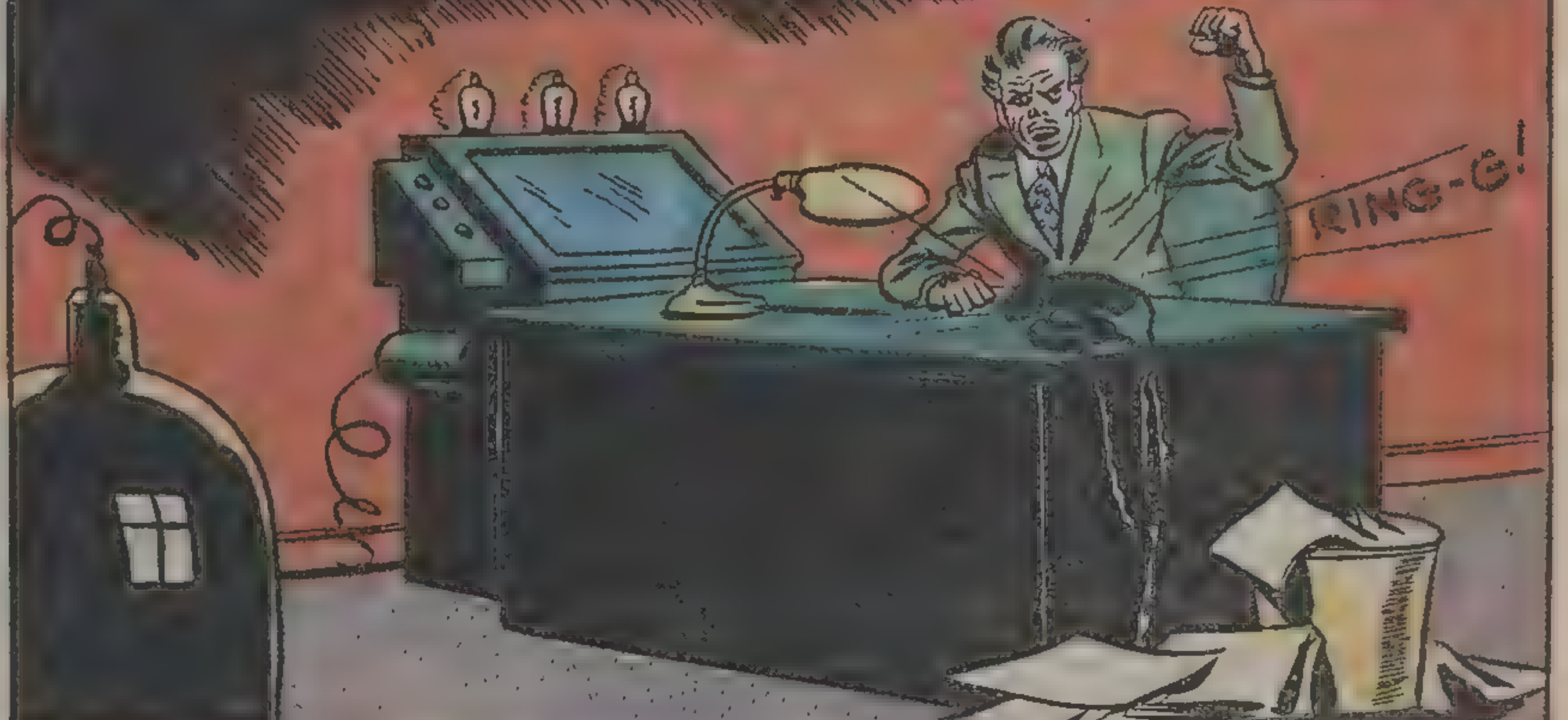
FOLLOW HIGHWAY 3 FORTY MILES NORTH, THEN SEVEN MILES WEST TO THE UPHILL ROAD AND YOU WILL SEE MY STRONGHOLD

I'M ON MY WAY! COME ON, STRIPESY!



ONCE MORE THE HAND CHUCKLES GRIMLY, ANTICIPATING EVENTS TO COME...

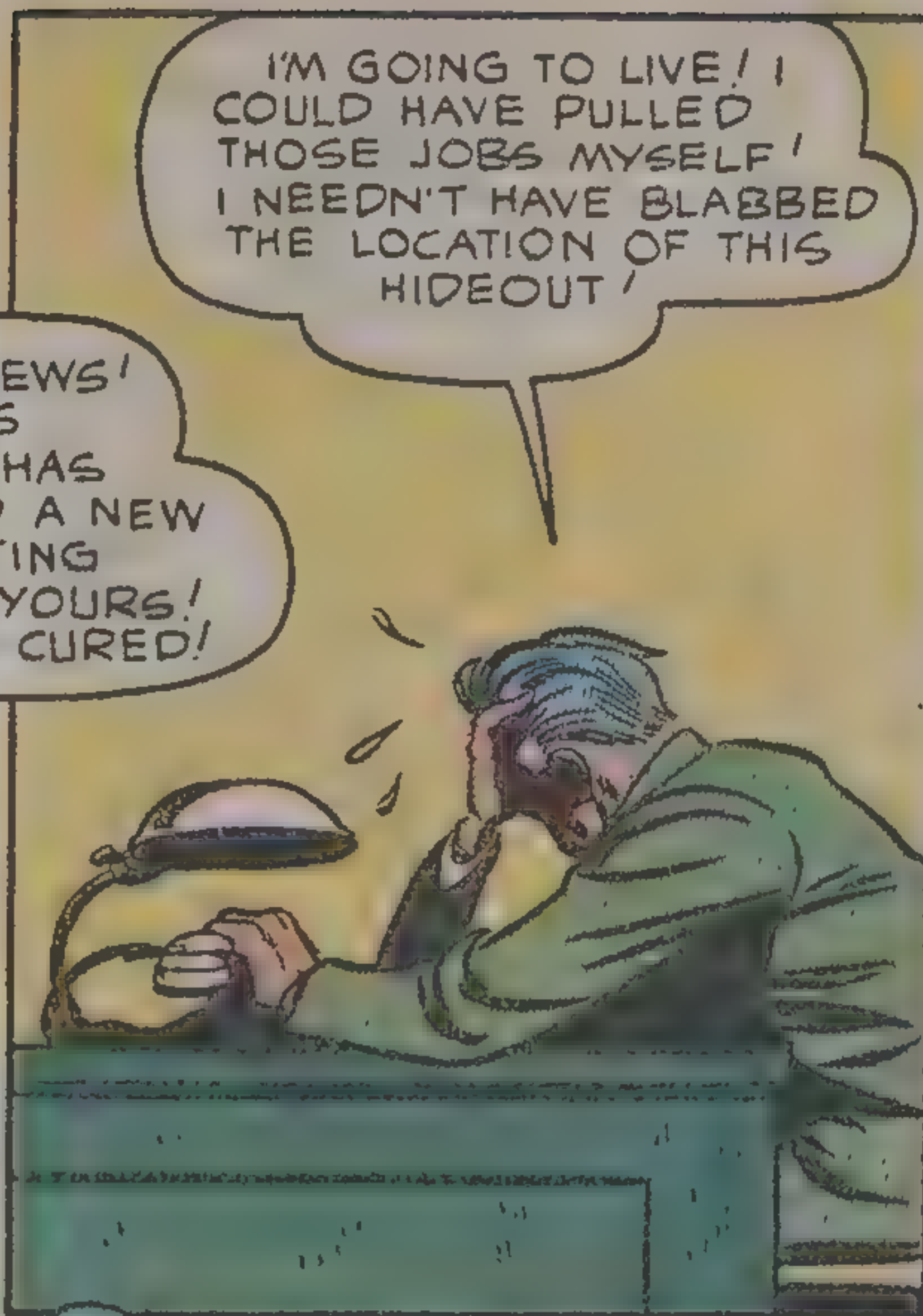
THEY'LL NEVER GET PAST THE TRAPS I HAVE SET HERE FOR INTRUDERS... THE TELEPHONE...



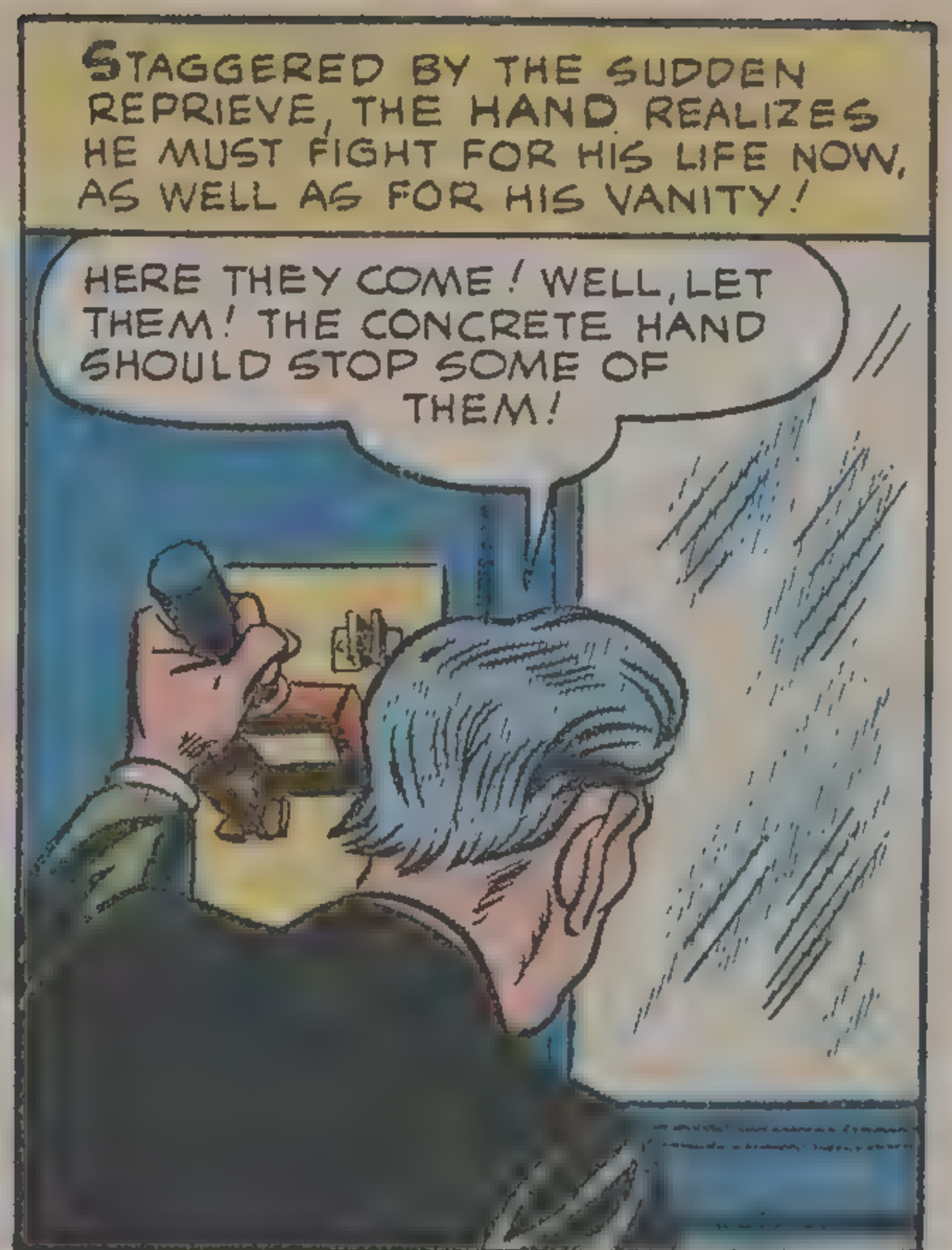


HELLO?
OH, IT'S YOU,
DOCTOR!
WHAT--?

GOOD NEWS!
A FAMOUS
SURGEON HAS
DISCOVERED A NEW
WAY OF TREATING
CASES LIKE YOURS!
YOU CAN BE CURED!

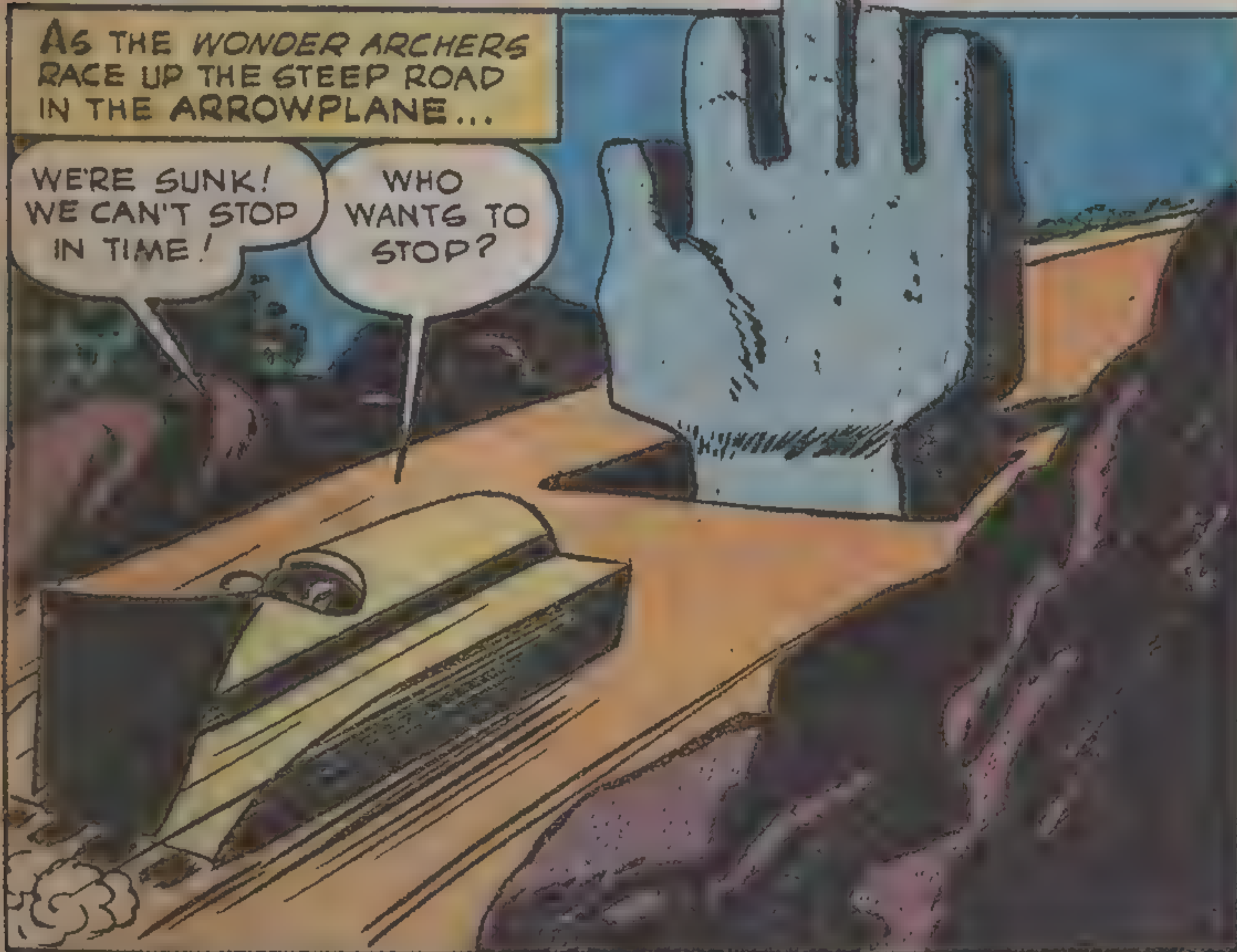


I'M GOING TO LIVE! I
COULD HAVE PULLED
THOSE JOBS MYSELF!
I NEEDN'T HAVE BLABBED
THE LOCATION OF THIS
HIDEOUT!



STAGGERED BY THE SUDDEN
REPRIVE, THE HAND REALIZES
HE MUST FIGHT FOR HIS LIFE NOW,
AS WELL AS FOR HIS VANITY!

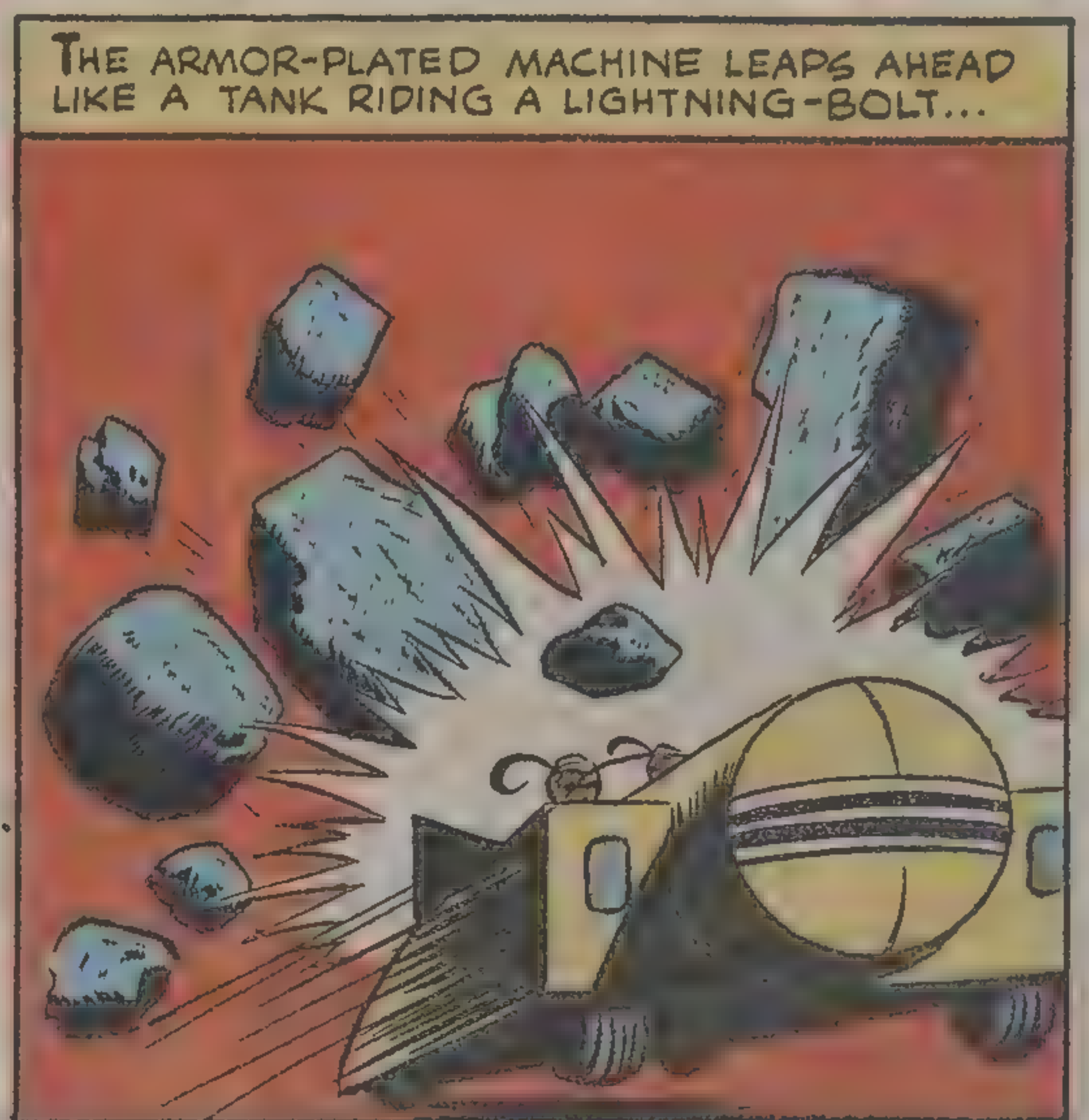
HERE THEY COME! WELL, LET
THEM! THE CONCRETE HAND
SHOULD STOP SOME OF
THEM!



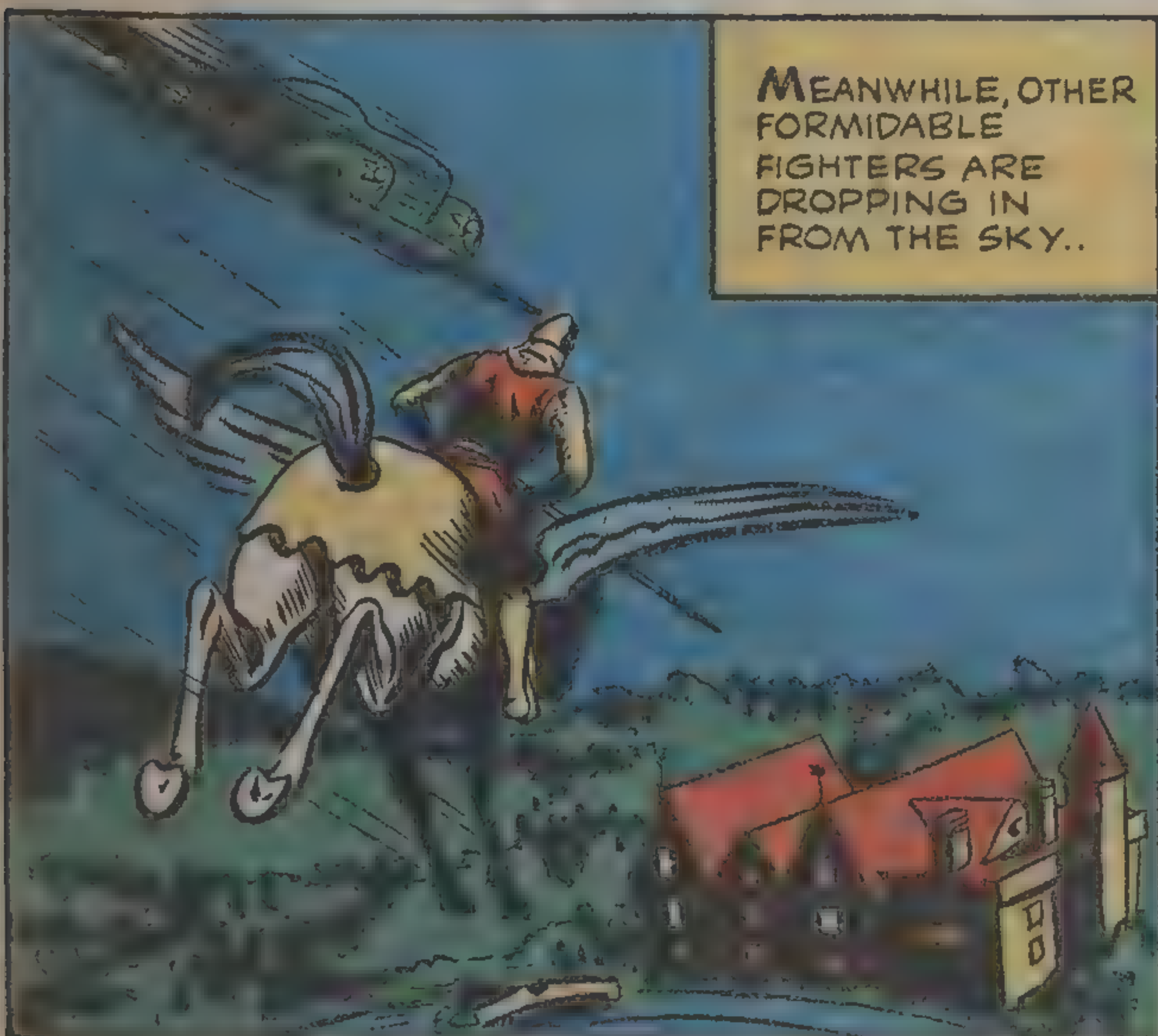
AS THE WONDER ARCHERS
RACE UP THE STEEP ROAD
IN THE ARROWPLANE...

WE'RE SUNK!
WE CAN'T STOP
IN TIME!

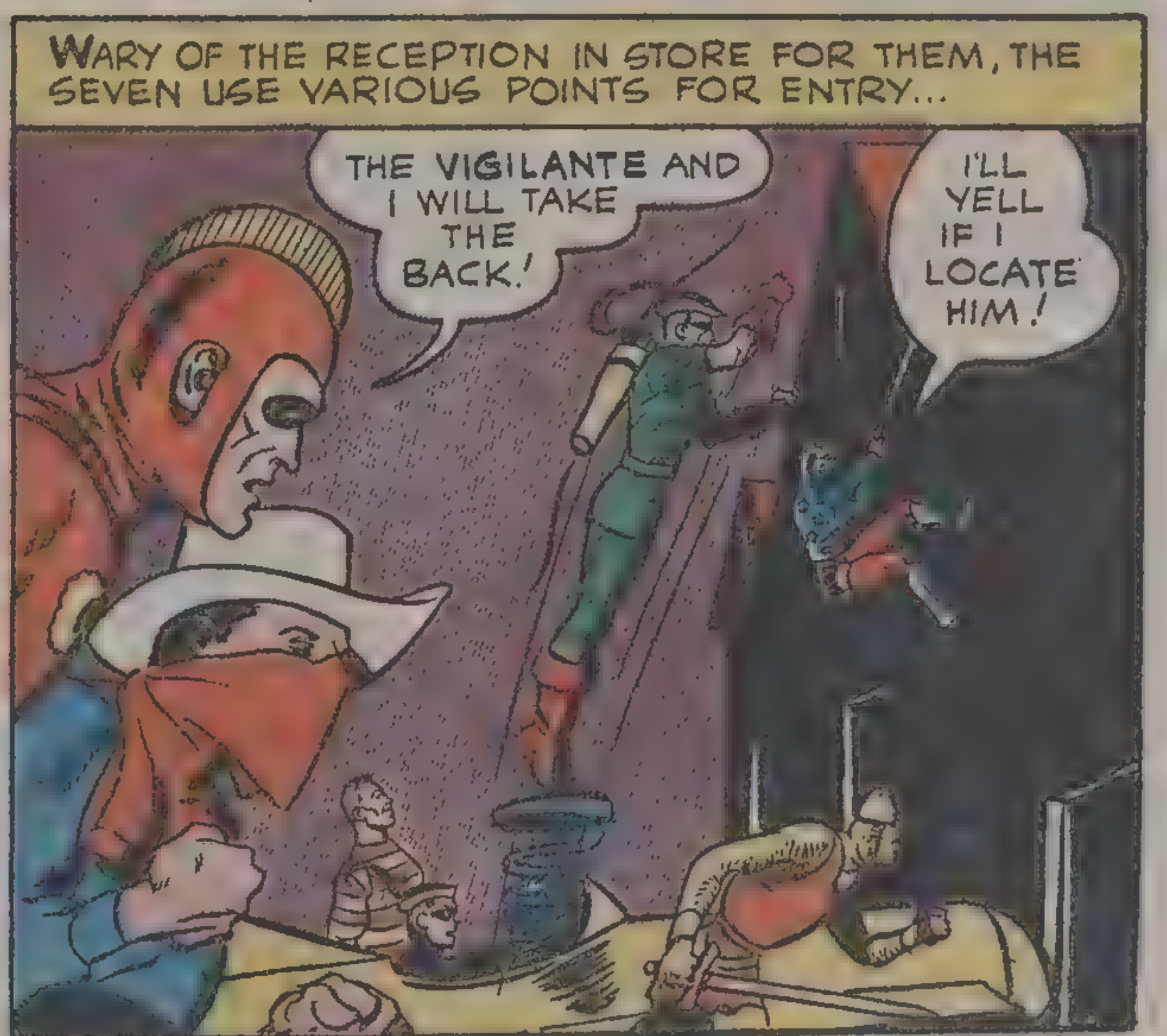
WHO
WANTS TO
STOP?



THE ARMOR-PLATED MACHINE LEAPS AHEAD
LIKE A TANK RIDING A LIGHTNING-BOLT...



MEANWHILE, OTHER
FORMIDABLE
FIGHTERS ARE
DROPPING IN
FROM THE SKY..

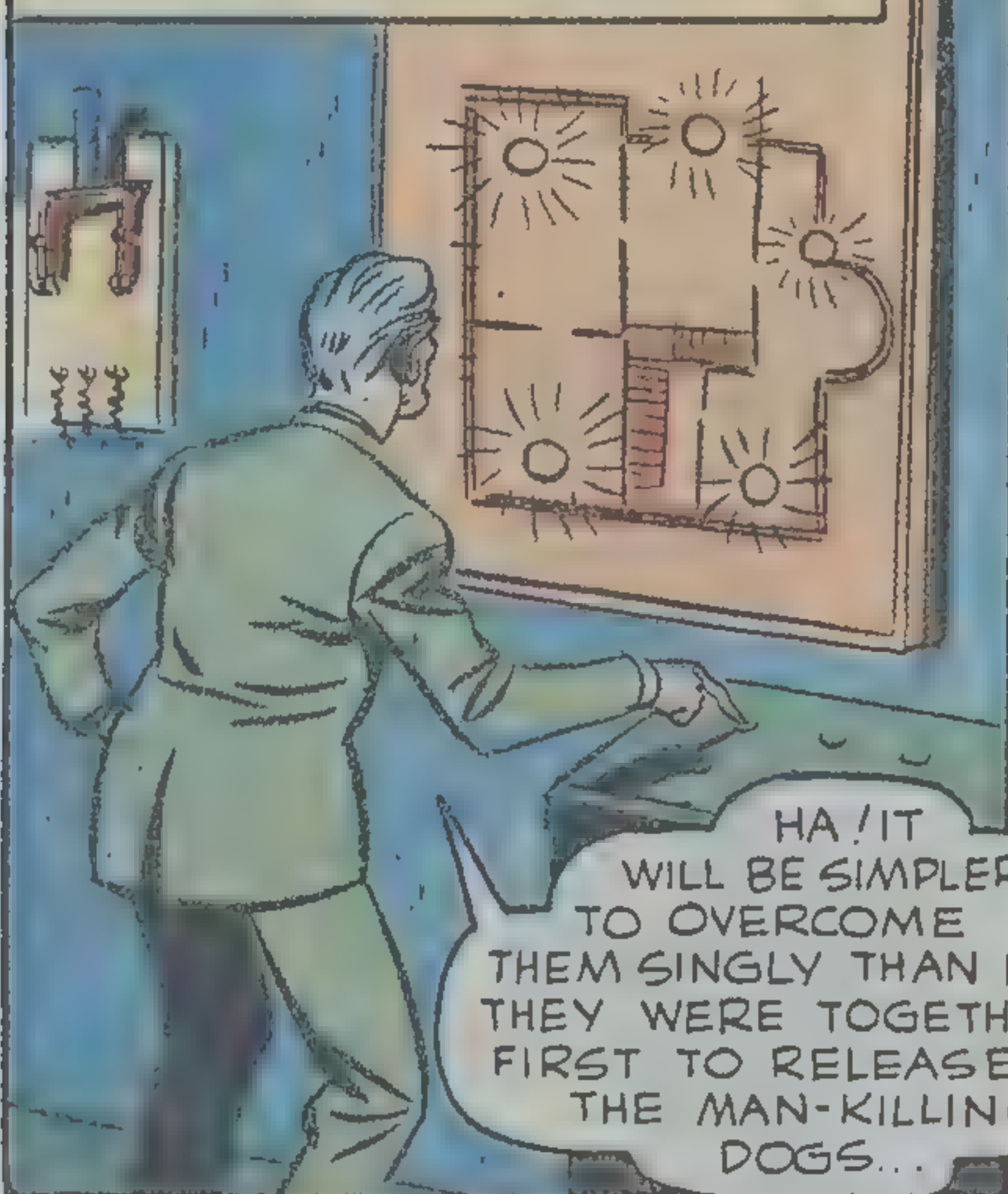


WARY OF THE RECEPTION IN STORE FOR THEM, THE
SEVEN USE VARIOUS POINTS FOR ENTRY...

THE VIGILANTE AND
I WILL TAKE
THE
BACK!

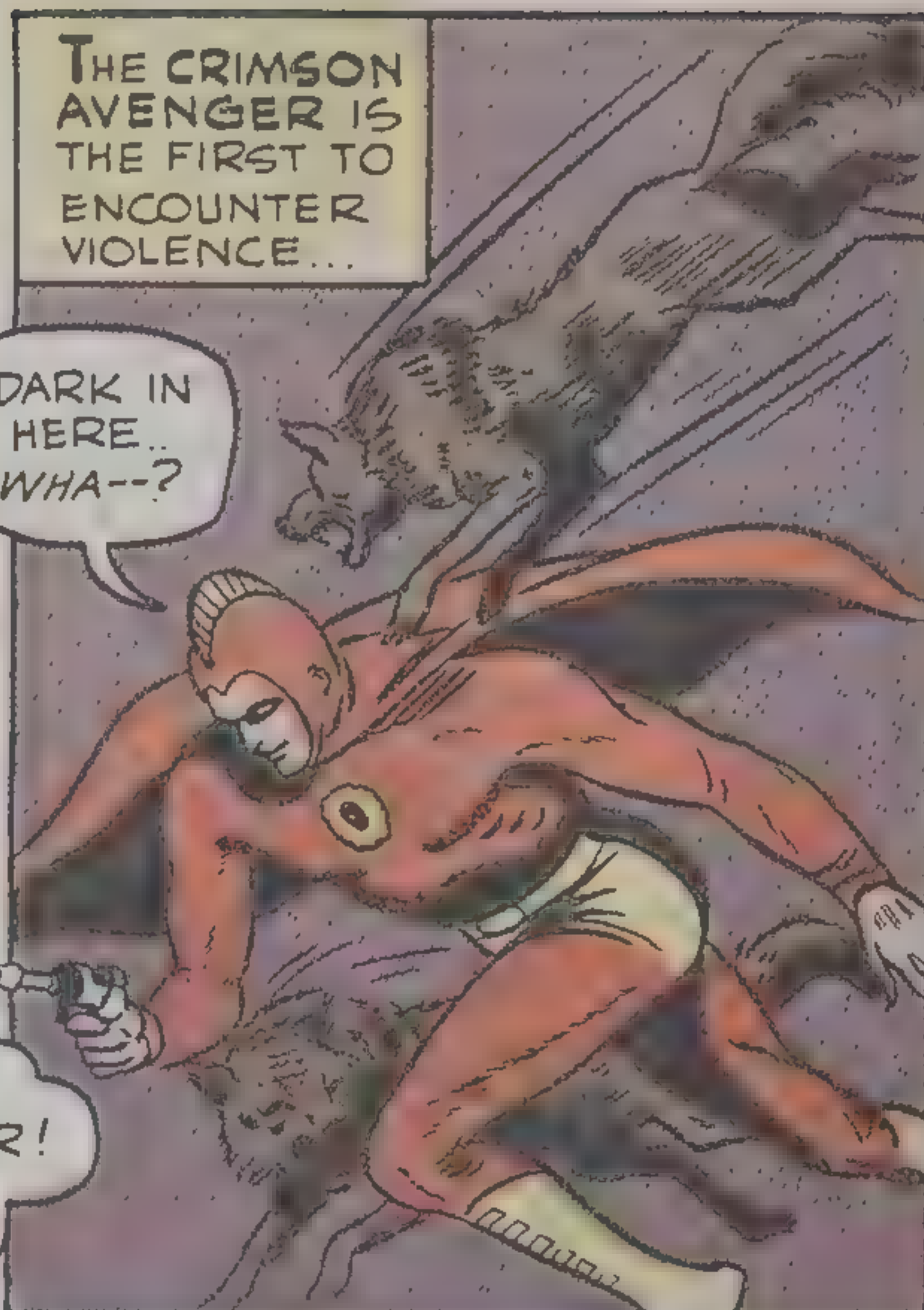
I'LL
YELL
IF I
LOCATE
HIM!

AN ELECTRICAL MAP INFORMS THE HAND OF THE PROGRESS OF EACH OF THE INTRUDERS...



THE CRIMSON AVENGER IS THE FIRST TO ENCOUNTER VIOLENCE...

DARK IN HERE...
WHA--?

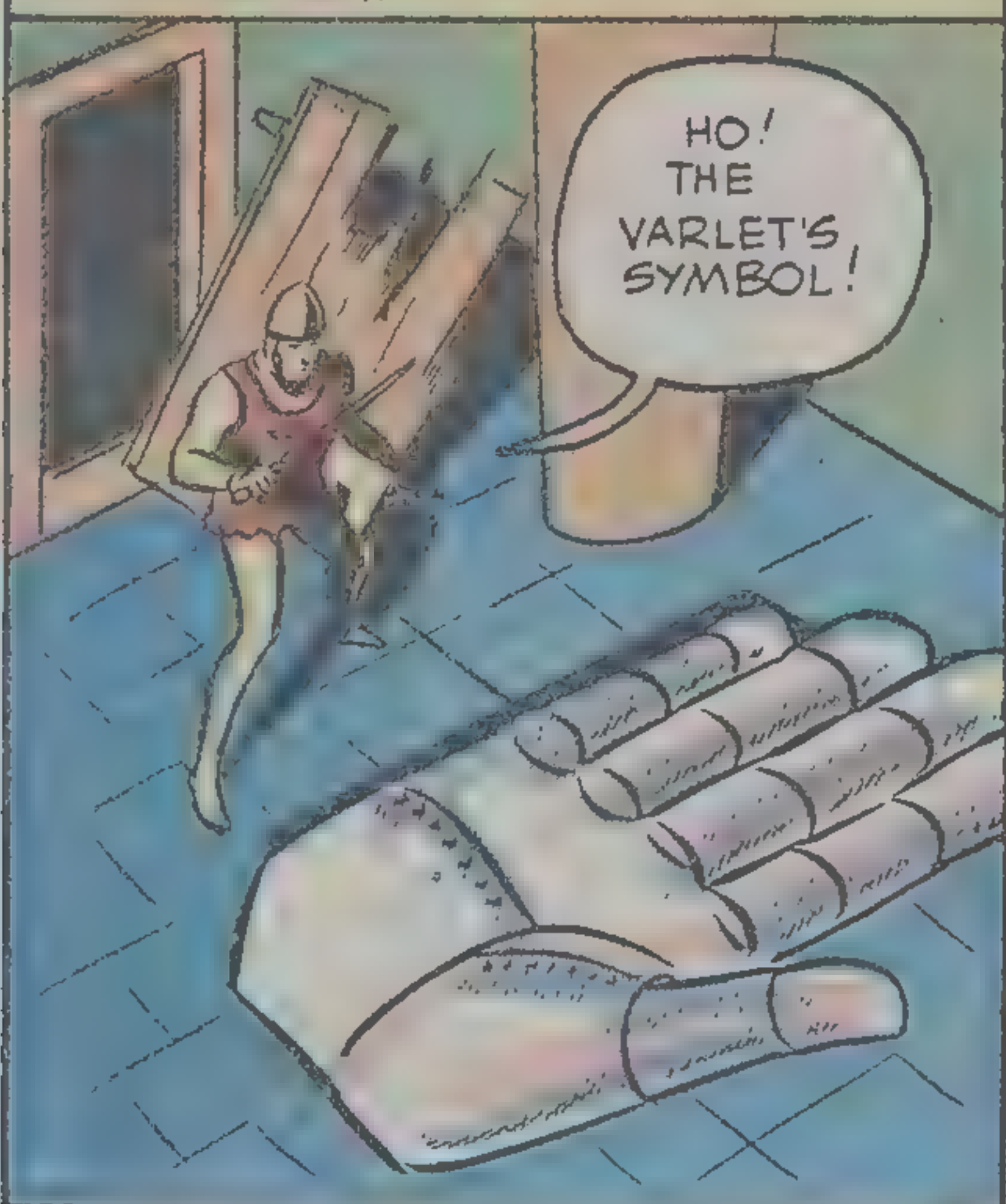


THIS GAS-GUN'LL MAKE YOU SLEEP IN PEACE--AND SAVE ME FROM SLEEPING IN PIECES!

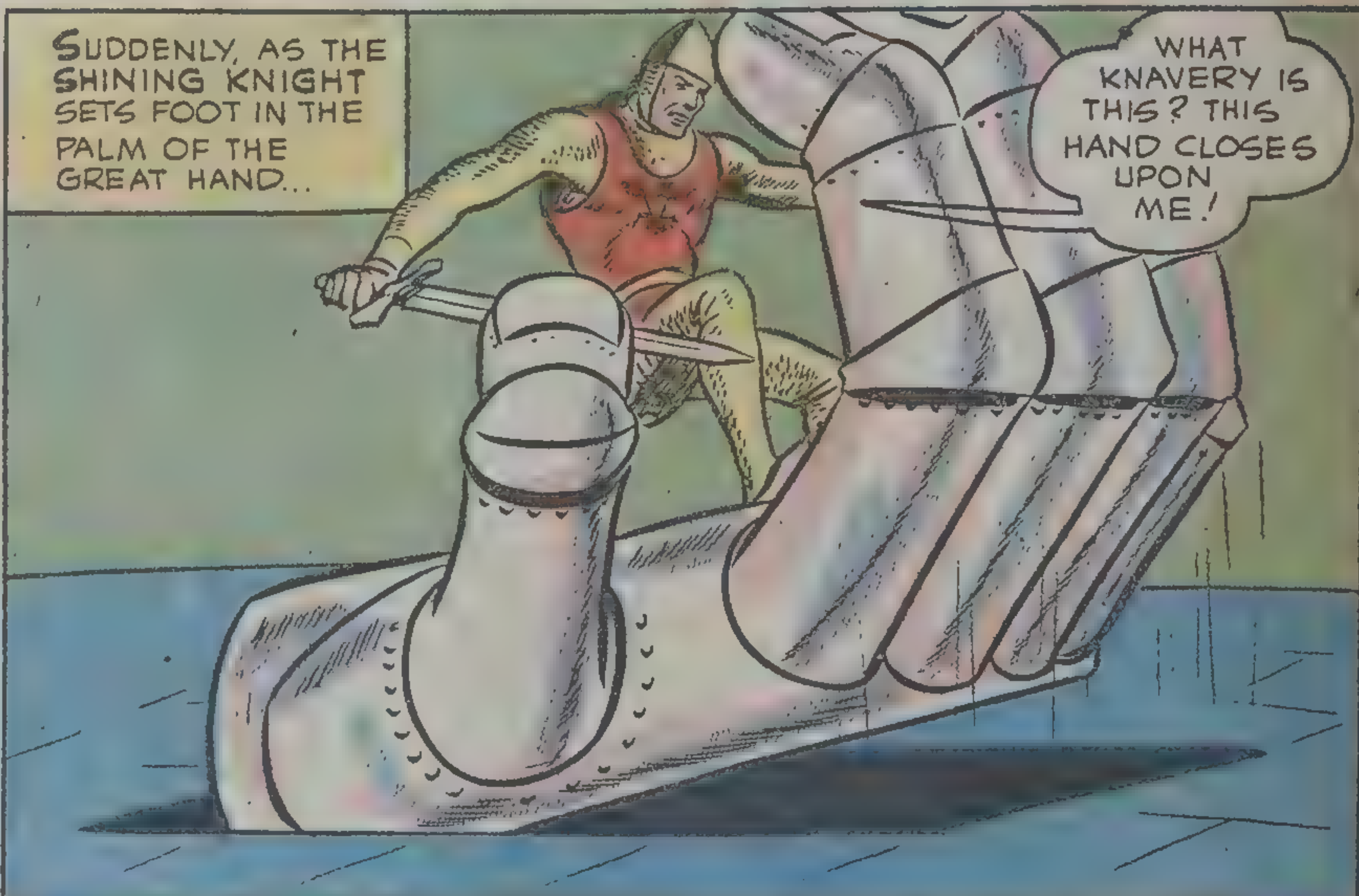


AND IN A ROOM AT THE FRONT OF THE HOUSE...

HO!
THE
VARLET'S
SYMBOL!



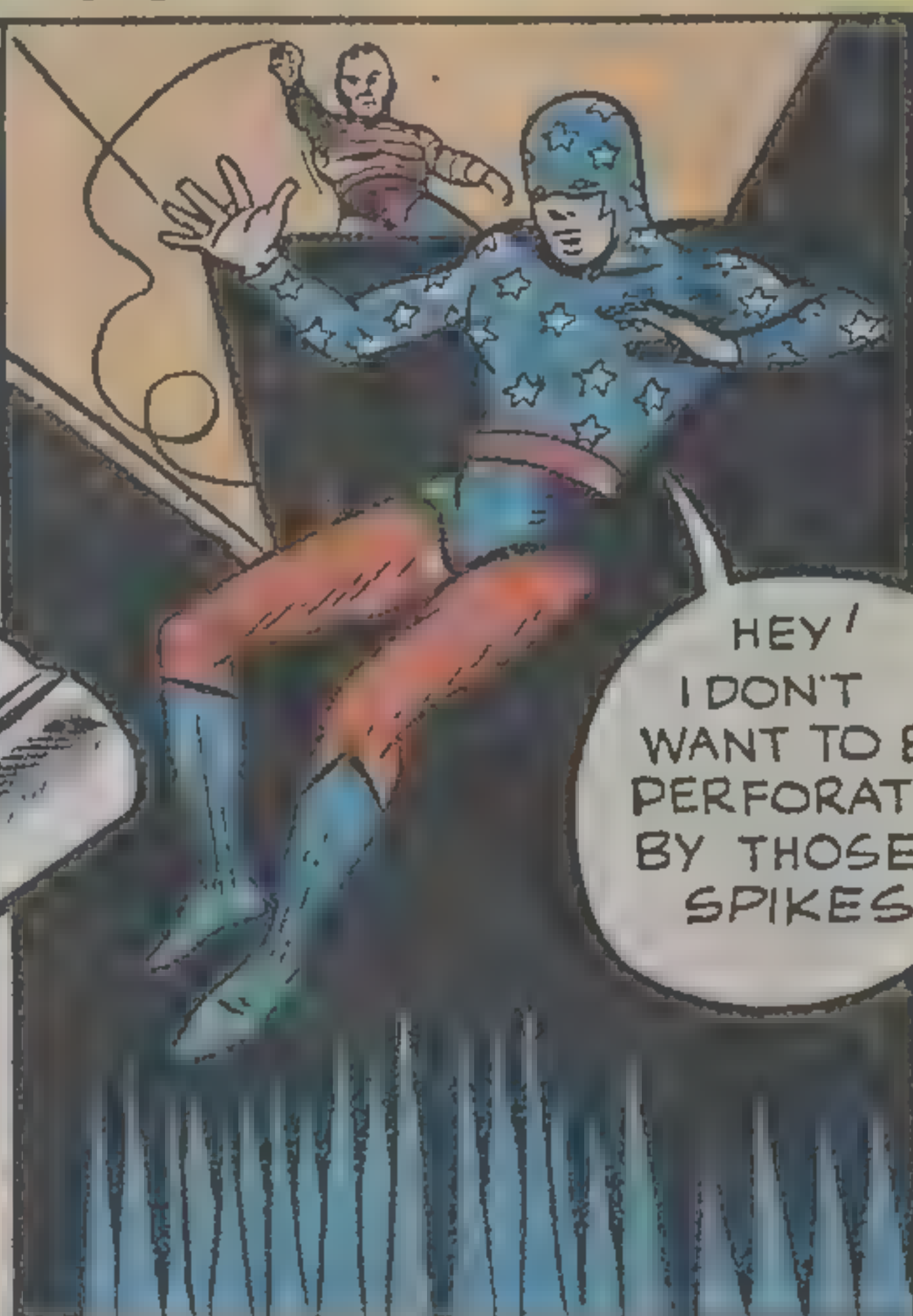
SUDDENLY, AS THE SHINING KNIGHT SETS FOOT IN THE PALM OF THE GREAT HAND...



HAIL TO THE MAGIC THAT FORGED THIS BLADE TO SHEER THROUGH STEEL AND STONE! VERILY, THIS WAS WHAT MY TWENTIETH CENTURY FRIENDS WOULD TERM A CLOSE CALL!



WHILE THE STAR-SPANGLED KID HAS A SPINE-CHILLING EXPERIENCE OF HIS OWN...



GOT YOU! LUCKY I WAS COILING UP THAT STRAND OF STEELITE!

LUCKY FOR ME!



AS THE VIGILANTE CLOSES THE DOOR OF A TINY ROOM BEHIND HIM... HE FINDS HIMSELF IN A ROOM "WIRED FOR DEATH!"



THE HEAT FROM THESE ELECTRIC COILS... I'LL BE ROASTED ALIVE! UNLESS...

UNLESS I CAN BLAST THE RIGHT WIRES AND BREAK THE ELECTRICAL CIRCUIT... AND I CAN!



MEANWHILE, THE HAND IS DISCOVERED IN HIS LOFTY CONTROL ROOM...

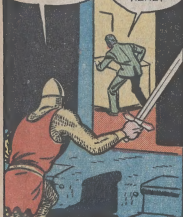
THERE HE IS! I'LL GIVE HIM A SURPRISE!

COUNT ME IN!



AHA! NOW TO ENGAGE THE SCOUNDREL IN COMBAT!

THE FOOLS THINK I DON'T KNOW THEY'RE HERE!



WELCOME, GENTLEMEN!

TIME TO SURRENDER, HAND!

AVANT, CREATURE OF EVIL!



BUT AN INVISIBLE BARRIER, WHICH NOT EVEN THE SHINING KNIGHT'S MAGIC SWORD CAN PIERCE, PROTECTS THE VILLAIN...



HA-HA-HA! THAT GLASS IS A FOOT THICK AND TWELVE FEET HIGH! AND IF YOU WILL LOOK OVERHEAD...

ZOUNDE! THIS IS A MIGHTY ENCHANTMENT!

WHEN I THROW THE SWITCH, LIGHTNING BOLTS WILL BURN YOU TO CINDERS! A HOT TRICK, EH?

FORSOOTH, MY FRIENDS, WE THINK WE ARE DOOMED!

MAYBE...



THE HAND HESITATES AS OTHER VISITORS ARRIVE..

LOOKS LIKE WE'RE JUST IN TIME FOR THE FINISH!

JUST IN TIME FOR YOUR FINISH! YOU HAVE ESCAPED MY OTHER TRAPS, BUT YOU WON'T ESCAPE THIS ONE! YOU'RE TOO LATE!

FOR A HEART-STOPPING INSTANT OF BREATHLESS ACTION, THE FATE OF SEVEN MORTALS HANGS IN THE BALANCE..

IF I CAN SHOOT IT DOWN

BANG!

THE VIGILANTE'S BULLET SEVERE THE LIGHTING-GUN FROM ITS SUPPORTING CABLES!

LOOK OUT, HAND! YOU'LL BE ELECTROCUTED!

THUS ENDS THE CAREER OF A MASTER OF EVIL SUCH AS THE WORLD HAS SELDOM SEEN ---AND, LET US HOPE, SELDOM WILL SEE..

TOO LATE! THE HAND HAS STRUCK HIS LAST BLOW AT HONESTY AND DECENCY!

AND THUS IS BORN A UNION OF GALLANT HEROES---MODERN KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE!

NOBLE COMRADES, NEED THIS BE OUR LAST ADVENTURE TOGETHER? LET US BAND OURSELVES INTO A FIGHTING UNIT WHENEVER CRIME STORMS THE BATTLEMENTS! ARE YOU WITH ME?

COUNT ME IN!

AND DON'T FORGET STRIPESY!

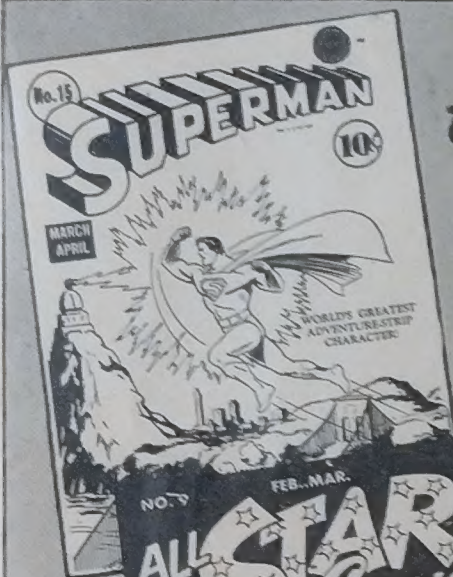
I'M ALWAYS READY FOR ACTION!

ME, TOO!

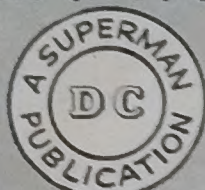
I SECOND THE MOTION!

THAT MAKES IT UNANIMOUS!

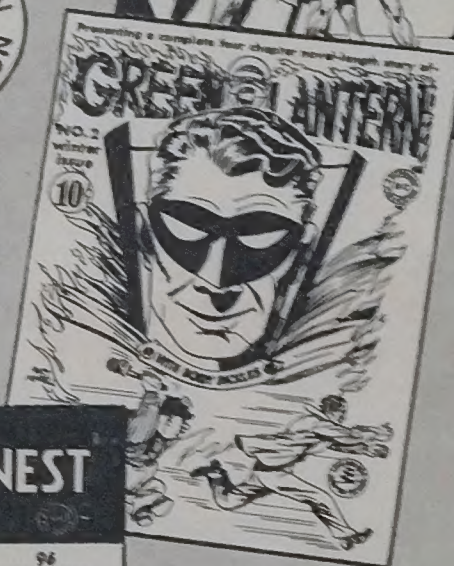
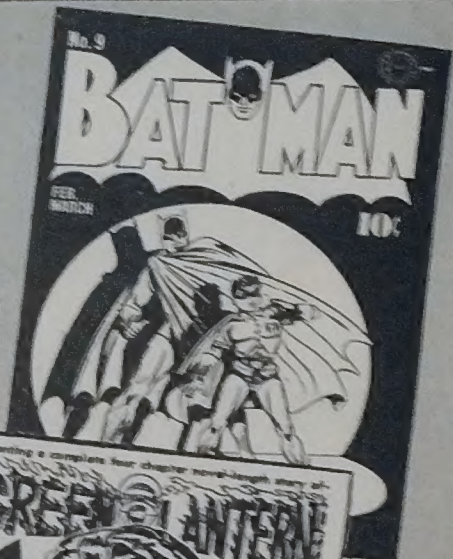
AND SO WE LEAVE THESE SEVEN SOLDIERS OF VICTORY UNTIL JUSTICE'S CLARION CALL AGAIN SUMMONS THEM TO ACTION IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF **LEADING COMICS**.....



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LOOK
FOR THIS
EMBLEM
ON
EVERY
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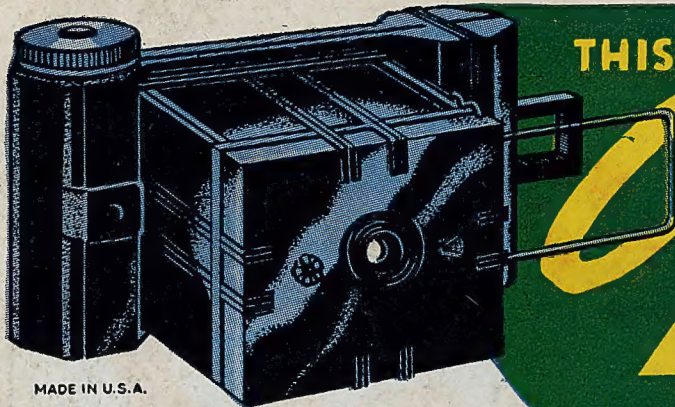


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